Chavit tells of ₱13-M necklace for Laarni's birthday

STORY ON PAGE A2

GMA admits helping to control Senate

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Cynthia D. Balana

NOW it's official: President Macapagal-Arroyo helped the administration coalition regain control of the Senate.

At a luncheon with Malacañang reporters at the State Dining Room yes-

GMA/A16

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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

WHAT'S INSIDE

- **Oil prices seen to go up** BUSINESS / B12
- **Gloria eyes new AFP chief** NEWS / A3
- **GSIS hikes calamity loans** NEWS / A3
- **Israel raid draws int'l flak** WORLD / A11

e-mail: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Thursday, July 25, 2002 ★★ 44 pages / 4 sections / vol.17 / no. 227 P15 website: www.inq7.net

. . . And then there were 10

GMA appoints Ople DFA secretary

By Carlito Pablo and Juliet L. Javellana

AND THEN there were 10.

The number of opposition members in the Senate will be further reduced to 10 after Sen. Blas Ople "gratefully accepted" last night the invitation of President Macapagal-Arroyo to join her Cabinet as secretary of foreign affairs.

"There was . . . little in this appointment that is politically contrived or motivated by partisanship," Ople said in a press statement.

With Ople accepting the President's offer, he will have to resign from the Senate. Which means the opposition bloc of Sen. Edgardo Angara will lose another member, following the defection of Sen. Robert Jaworski to the administration coalition on Sunday.

With Jaworski and Ople out of the opposition, the balance in the Senate would stand at 13-10 in favor of the administration.

Another opposition senator, Sen. Vicente Sotto III, is widely believed to go the way of Jaworski and Ople after he had accepted an appointment from the President as "overseer" of the Dangerous Drugs Board.

"It's just a matter of time," a source told the INQUIRER last week.

"The job grows out of my work in the Senate as chairman of the committee on foreign relations since I was first elected in 1992. It also grows out of my role as the labor minister that conceptualized and launched

...AND/A16

JESS YUSON

NO LONGER "solid as a rock." But even as a "pebble," the opposition led by Sen. Edgardo Angara creates ripples of dissent as he delivers a "contra-Sona," harping on the country's poverty where 1 out of 3 children is malnourished.

Jawo: Edong behind black propaganda

By Rocky Nazareno and Cynthia D. Balana

IS it a case of tit for tat?

Sen. Robert Jaworski yesterday accused Sen. Edgardo Angara of spreading the rumor that he had defected to the administration bloc in exchange for the deferred collection of a P300-million loan from the Philippine National Bank (PNB).

In an interview, Jaworski said he had "stone, rock evidence" that it was Angara behind the rumor. He also said the leader of the opposition bloc could have been "heartbroken" by his decision to bolt and "decided to make me pay by maligning my character."

"I think you have to ask Senator Angara why, and then you will know," Jaworski said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo told reporters that the rumor was "black propaganda" against Jaworski.

"He was warned, he was threatened," she said yesterday. "They told him that if he walks over, they're going to do the black propaganda on him. They're doing it."

But Angara denied the accusa-

JAWO/A16

EDWIN BACASMAS

FISHING for verification of the price of the lowly "galunggong," President Macapagal goes to market in Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City.

When GMA buys fish, it has to be ₱60/kilo

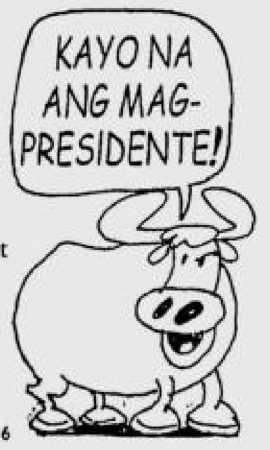
By Dona Pazzibugan

THE HOUSEWIFE living in Malacañang went out of her way to prove that *galunggong* (round scad) was sold at P60 a kilo and that it was not *"bilasa"* (stale).

President Macapagal-Arroyo went back yesterday to a market in Quezon City where she said she bought the so-called poor man's fish at P60 a kilo last week.

Fish vendors at Commonwealth Market eagerly accom-

WHEN/A16



KAYO NA ANG MAG-PRESIDENTE!

5 Sayyaf leaders face charges in US

AFTER hunting them down in the jungles of Western Mindanao and offering a $5-million reward for their heads, the US government on Tuesday threw the book at five Abu Sayyaf leaders.

President Macapagal-Arroyo welcomed the US indictment against the five notorious kidnappers in connection with the abduction of four Americans that led to the deaths of two of them. They were also charged with the killing of a Filipino nurse.

Other Philippine officials, however, said they would assert their right to prosecute any captured leader of the Moro bandit group linked to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

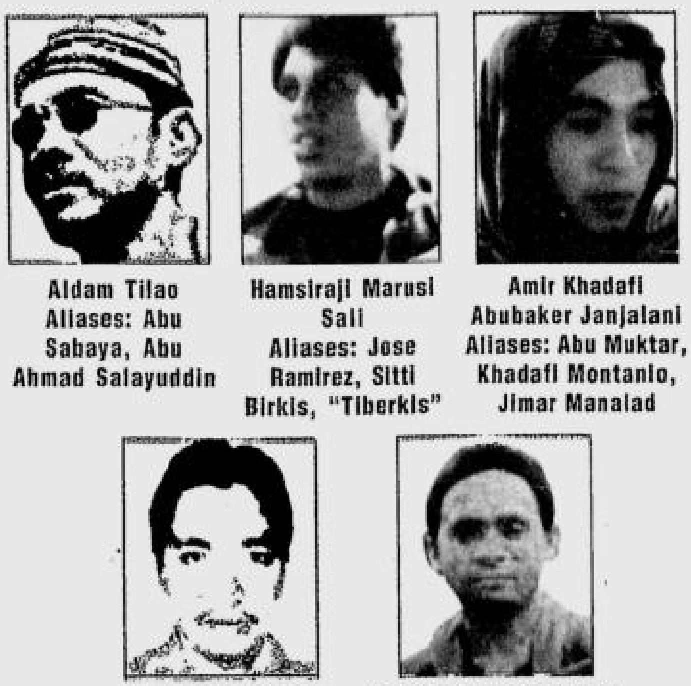
"The United States sends a signal: We will work to track down and prosecute all those who commit barbaric acts of terrorism here and abroad," US Deputy Attorney General Larry Thompson said in Washington.

Named in the indictments are Khadaffy Abubakar Janjalani,

5 SAYYAF/A17

Diplomatic Security Service
U. S. Department of State

Kidnappers/Murderers



Aldam Tilao
Aliases: Abu Sabaya, Abu Ahmad Salayuddin

Hamsiraji Marusi Sali
Aliases: Jose Ramirez, Sitti Birkis, "Tiberkis"

Amir Khadafi Abubaker Janjalani
Aliases: Abu Muktar, Khadafi Montanio, Jimar Manalad

Jainal Antel Sali Jr.
Aliases: Abu Solaiman, Abu Solayman

Isnilon Totoni Hapilon
Aliases: Abu Musab, Abu Tuan, "The Deputy"

THE WANTED: Suspects' photos are posted on the website of the US Department of State Diplomatic Security Service.

UN report praises RP adherence to democracy

THE GLOBAL march of democracy has slowed to a crawl, but in Asia the forces of freedom continue to gain ground, the United Nations reported yesterday.

The UN Development Program also shone the spotlight on the Philippines, citing it for its commitment to democracy. The UNDP said it chose Manila as the "very symbolic" site for the global launch of its annual Human Development Report.

Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, chief author of the UNDP report, told a press briefing that the choice of Manila as the venue for the launch was "very symbolic," because the UNDP chose locations where the main theme of the report had "some real meaning."

"We really felt that the Philippines was one of the foremost countries where the people of the country are really committed to democracy. I don't think

UN/A4

Kaye: Rod still charging expenses to Nida account

By Jerry Esplanada and Michael Lim Ubac

ROD Strunk continued to siphon off wife Nida Blanca's funds even after her brutal slay in November, the popular actress' only child told the INQUIRER the other day.

Katherine Joan "Kaye" Torres cited her stepfather's "credit card billings and statements, some dated April 2002, which confirmed our fears that he's still using my mom's funds."

"We continue getting credit card billings and statements. Payments were reflected in those statements. They showed that Rod's still charging his expenses to my mom's accounts," Torres said.

Yesterday, Strunk through his lawyers branded the testimony of Philip Medel Jr. as "a fruit of a poisonous tree," and asked the justice department to junk Medel's confession.

In an omnibus motion, Roger Lawrence Strunk Jr. asked the Department of Justice to "exclude or disregard" Medel's affidavit executed on Nov. 18,

KAYE/A4

Gloria's brod sits on board of College Assurance Plan

By Elena R. Torrijos

A BROTHER of President Macapagal-Arroyo sits on the board of the embattled College Assurance Plan Philippines Inc. (CAP). The Securities and Exchange Commission had ordered CAP to divest itself of some of its investments in sister companies like the Fil-Estate Group to enable it to cover its trust fund deficiency of P2.5 billion.

Diosdado Macapagal Jr., the President's brother, is one of the 11 directors of the country's biggest pre-need company.

CAP insiders said Ms Macapagal's late father Diosdado Macapagal was the first chair of CAP in 1980.

SEC officials declined to comment on reports that the SEC last week sent CAP a cease-and-desist order or a show-cause letter that the SEC later junked al-

GLORIA'S/A16

NAKAKAHIYA !!!

ERAP'S GIFT TO LAARNI

Chavit tells of ₱13-M necklace

By Volt Contreras

TO GIFT Joseph Estrada's favorite mistress, Laarni Enriquez, with a P13-million necklace for her birthday in 1999, several of his friends chipped in P1.2 million each.

This was one of the highlights of "juetenggate" whistle-blower Luis "Chavit" Singson's testimony yesterday before the Sandiganbayan.

On his third day of direct examination by Solicitor General Simeon Marcelo, the former governor of Ilocos Sur, said it was controversial businessman, and now Manila congressman, Mark Jimenez who suggested that they pass the hat for the pricey necklace.

He said Jimenez coaxed them into giving P1.2 million each during the birthday celebration itself, when they also played mahjong with the former president.

Singson did not identify the other Estrada buddies present at the time who agreed to foot the bill. But he said several days later, businessman Jaime Dichaves, now a co-accused in the ex-president's plunder case, called to collect his (Singson's) share.

The prosecution's star witness said this should explain the P1.2-million check he had drawn from his Metrobank account, which allegedly contained Estrada's payola collections from jueteng lords.

'Too much'

In short, Singson drew his contribution not from his own pocket, but from Estrada's jueteng money. He said he found the amount "too much."

Marcelo presented to the anti-graft court a copy of Singson's Metrobank check, which he said ended up being deposited to Enriquez's account with Philippine Savings Bank's branch in Murphy, Quezon City.

Also yesterday, Singson recounted his falling out with the ex-president, and how two former Estrada Cabinet members, now Sen. Edgardo Angara and San Juan Rep. Ronaldo Zamora, tried to stop him from exposing his *compadre's* alleged payola racket.

The former governor said he parted ways with Estrada after the latter did nothing to fix the "trouble" caused by Charlie "Atong" Ang in the operation of Bingo 2-ball in Ilocos Sur.

In September 2000, Ang, then a consultant of the Philippine Gaming and Amusement Corp., gave the Bingo 2-ball franchise for half of the province to Singson's brother Bonito, and for the other half to Singson's cousin and "my political enemy," Eric Singson.

When he confronted Ang, Singson said, he was told that the decision came from Estrada, who was in the Unites States at the time.

Shortly after, Ang also allegedly told Singson's son, "Your father's political career is over." Ang said he had worked out the appointment of a new police provincial commander and directors in Ilocos Sur.

When Estrada returned from the US, Singson immediately called to complain about Ang. But he said Estrada's reply was, "*Wala akong pakialam d'yan* (that's not my concern)."

Goodbye to Erap

Singson told the court it was then that he realized, "*Niloloko na ako* (they were running circles around me)."

That was his last phone conversation with Estrada as a friend, Singson said. "I told him it was not really about money or Bingo 2 ball anymore. *Kahiyaan na ito* (it's a matter of pride now)."

He also recalled saying to Estrada, "*Kung dahil lang dito bibitawan mo ako, bibitaw na rin ako sa 'yo* (if you're letting go of me just because of this, I can do the same)." He pointed out to the court, "That was me saying goodbye to him."

Singson proceeded to consult his lawyer who, he said, reminded him how "powerful" Estrada was, since "he controlled Congress, the Senate, the military, and the NBI."

The same lawyer, whom Singson did not name, noted that he had "no evidence on anything" he intended to raise against Estrada.

That was when he decided to secure a fax copy of the jueteng ledgers from Yolanda Ricaforte, Estrada's alleged "auditor" for the gambling payola.

Jueteng auditor

"Knowing my life was already in danger," Singson said, he also executed "an affidavit." He did not say what the affidavit stated.

He said he also consulted Estrada's sons Jinggoy Estrada and JV Ejercito, who assured him they would discuss the problem with their father. But nothing came out of these, Singson said.

'Good as approved'

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo played down the significance of the proposed Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA) with the United States, saying it was as a mere "accounting agreement."

"As (Defense Secretary) Angelo Reyes said, it's an accounting procedure. It doesn't authorize anything," she said.

She was referring to critics' claim that the MLSA will accommodate greater US military presence and will even allow another US military base here.

Although she said she has not yet seen the final draft, the President hinted that the MLSA is as good as approved.

She tied up its approval with the military equipment that the US will leave behind when the Balikatan 02-1 exercises end this month.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo receives the Human Development Report poster from Mark Malloch Brown, administrator of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and Jose Ramos Horta, foreign minister of East Timor, during the launching of the report in Malacañang Wednesday.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Human progress improving—UN

THE UNITED Nations reported many countries in Eastern and Central Europe, the former Soviet Union and sub-Saharan Africa have lost ground over the past decade in terms of life expectancy, education and income per person.

While the UN Human Development Program found progress in most countries in its latest ranking released Wednesday, the report said, more than 60 of 173 countries ranked in this year's human development index have lower income per capita today than before 1990. In 26 countries, incomes are lower than in 1980.

Norway retained the top ranking from a year ago, followed by Sweden, Canada and Belgium. Australia slipped from second to fifth, with the United States down one spot in sixth.

Bottom of the list

All 24 countries at the bottom of the index are in sub-Saharan Africa, with Sierra Leone again ranked last.

Iraq was not in the index because of "lack of information" on the country, said Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, the report's chief author.

East Timor, the world's youngest nation, also was not included.

The report "shows substantial progress over the last decades in the level of human development in most parts of the world," said UNDP, which released the Human Development Report for 2002 at the Philippines' presidential palace.

"But the report calls attention to tragic exceptions in Eastern and Central Europe, the former Soviet Union and sub-Saharan Africa, where many countries actually have a lower HDI (human development index) today than they did at the start of the 1990s," it said.

Norway has risen six places since 1990, while Sweden and Australia both climbed nine places. The United States, Iceland and France have fallen four spots, while Japan dropped five and Switzerland six.

In East Asia, many economies have made striking progress since 1990, despite the financial crises that hit the region toward the end of the decade, the report said.

China jump

China has risen most, jumping 14 places. Singapore and South Korea have moved up eight places, Thailand 10, and Malaysia 12, it said.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, as many as nine countries have risen five or more places since 1990, including Chile, Costa Rica and Panama.

The pain of economic transition has taken its toll in the former East bloc. The Russian Federation and Ukraine have fallen 20 places since 1990, and Moldova and Tajikistan plunged at least 30 spots.

Only Hungary and Poland defied the trend, moving up eight places.

The report, UNDP said, looks beyond per capita income, human resource development and basic needs as measure of human progress. ***AP***

Handcuffs no way to treat Pinoy deportees, says Gloria

By Carlito Pablo

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo will ask the United States to stop its practice of putting handcuffs on Filipinos and putting them in chartered flights when they are deported.

President Macapagal yesterday said that she will take this up with US State Secretary Colin Powell, who is due for a visit in Manila early August.

"When Colin Powell calls on me, I will take it up with him," Ms Macapagal said.

Howls of protests were raised late June when the United States deported 63 illegally staying Filipinos who were handcuffed and transported by plane chartered by the US Immigration and Naturalization Service.

"That's not the way it should be handled," President Macapagal said.

She said that deportees can be sent back through regular commercial flights and not through chartered planes like in the movie "Con Air."

Then Acting Press Secretary Silvestre Afable defended the US government, saying the use of handcuffs is a standard practice accepted worldwide.

Citing the principle of reciprocity, the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation recently said that it will also start using metal chains to restrain foreigners who are up for deportation.

The President said that she had discussed this issue before with officials of the Department of Foreign Affairs, a post she is presently holding in concurrent capacity.

"I said we have to work for a dignified treatment of our overseas Filipinos," Ms Macapagal said.

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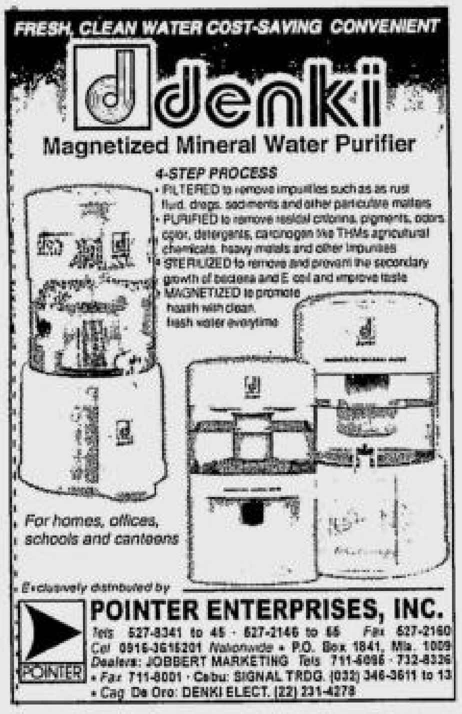
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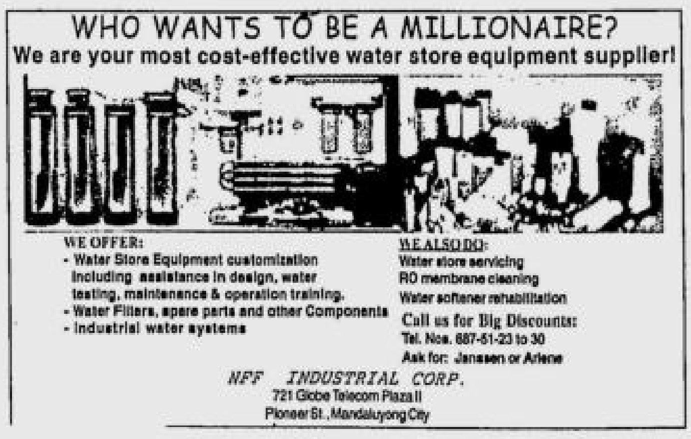
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Gloria to name new AFP chief in Sept.

By Carlito Pablo

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo will name a new chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines on Sept. 1 when Gen. Roy Cimatu retires.

Ms Macapagal yesterday said she will not extend for a second time the term of Cimatu, who was originally set to retire this July but was given a two-month extension when he was appointed AFP chief last May.

"I will announce it on Sept. 1, and the takeover will be on Sept. 4," the President said.

Ms Macapagal said that all three-star generals in the AFP are on the short list of probable replacements for Cimatu, the third armed forces chief under her administration after Angelo Reyes, now defense secretary, and Diomedio Villanueva, currently a director in a government-owned corporation.

Even before Cimatu's appointment was announced, it was reported that the choice for his successor would be a close race between Lt. Gen. Narciso Abaya and Lt. Gen. Dionisio Santiago.

Abaya is a member of Class 1971 of the US Military Academy at West Point and currently third in command as the AFP deputy chief of staff.

Santiago is currently commanding general of the Army. A member of Class 1970 of the Philippine Military Academy, he was the first commander of the elite anti-coup Task Force Libra that put down the May 1, 2001 rebellion of supporters of ex-President Joseph Estrada.

Santiago will retire in April 2003, much ahead of Abaya's retirement, and may be given the top AFP post first. Abaya is scheduled to retire in December 2004.

Quezon raid yields ₱1.7M worth of 'coke'

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LUCENA CITY—Combined police and military operatives yesterday seized at least P1.7 million worth of high-grade cocaine, and P130,000 worth of methamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu in Barangay Bantilan, Infanta town, northern Quezon.

Arrested during the pre-dawn raid conducted by the Quezon police, Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG), and the military's Southern Luzon Command were four suspected drug traffickers, including a retired Army officer.

They were identified as retired Army S/Sgt. Mariano Ortaliza, 48; his wife Belen, 53; Radil Ramos, 39, and his wife Rosalie, 33. Radil and Belen are siblings. All are residents of Barangay Bantilan.

'Family affair'

"It's a family affair," Senior Supt. Roberto Rosales said as he presented the suspects to newsmen here. "Their houses are only 15 meters apart." He said the suspects did not resist arrest.

The team also confiscated various drug paraphernalia, firearms and ammunition, and cash totaling P31,000.

Supt. Rueben Theodore Sindac, Quezon police intelligence and investigation chief, told the INQUIRER that the suspects had been under surveillance for two months.

There were police and military operatives in every phase of the group's operation, according to Col. Francis Lanuza, AFP Southern Luzon Command intelligence chief based in Camp Nakar here.

Flown by helicopter to Manila in the afternoon, the suspects, the drug haul, and all the other evidence were presented to President Macapagal-Arroyo and Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. at the police headquarters in Camp Crame.

Ms Macapagal, who is taking a direct hand in the nationwide anti-crime drive, commended the officials for what Malacañang noted was the biggest drug bust in the Southern Luzon this year.

The cocaine was packed in eight pieces of heat-sealed plastic bags, while the shabu was wrapped in at least 42 sealed plastic bags. Also confiscated were two pieces of *"tipak-tipak,"* bigger plastic packs of shabu.

"They are big-time drug dealers," Rosales said. "This is bulk packaging." He said cocaine's current market price was P5 million a kilo, and shabu, P1 million per kilo.

Search warrant

Judge Gregorio Villanueva of the Regional Trial Court, 4th Judicial Region in San Pablo City, issued the search warrants for illegal possession of firearms and violation of the Dangerous Drugs Act.

Rosales declined to say where the suspects might have obtained the seized drugs. But he said the group could be remnants of the drug syndicate that attempted to smuggle in 500 kilos or P1 billion worth of shabu in October last year, also in Infanta.

The thwarted attempt involved Mayor Ronnie Mitra of Panukulan, Quezon, who was nabbed while transporting the drugs in an ambulance.

Police records show that most of the shabu being trafficked in the country comes from China.

The suspects were "not yet cooperative" as of yesterday, according to Rosales, saying the drugs had merely been entrusted to them "for safekeeping." ***With TJ Burgonio and an AFP report***

Census papers now available nationwide

FILIPINOS can now obtain copies of birth, marriage and death certificates practically anywhere in the country and no longer have to wait in line for hours at the National Statistics Office in Quezon City

The NSO announced yesterday that its new Census Serbilis Centers are rolling out nationwide, including six centers in Metro Manila alone.

The NSO said it has also opened 11 regional outlets nationwide to spare the public from having to spend and travel all the way to the Census Serbilis main outlet in Manila just to get their civil registry documents.

More Serbilis Centers in regions are expected to open by the end of the third quarter this year, through a 12-year multiphase civil registry system project of NSO and Unisys Philippines.

The main Serbilis Center is on East Avenue in Quezon City while the other five Metro Manila Census Serbilis Centers are in Pasay, Caloocan, Makati, Muntinlupa and Pasig cities.

In Luzon, regional Serbilis Centers are now operational in the cities of Baguio, Tuguegarao, City of San Fernando in Pampanga, and San Fernando City in La Union. Visayas has centers in the cities of Cebu, Iloilo and Tacloban; while Mindanao has centers in the key cities of Butuan, Cagayan de Oro, Davao and Zamboanga.

Seen to rev up Census service, birth records for the period of 1960-1986 and 1992-1996 have been converted into digital format, enabling document transaction to be faster.

Carmelita N. Ericta, NSO Administrator and Civil Registrar-General, said this period covers birth documents of some 50.6 million Filipinos or close to two-thirds of the population.

GSIS calamity loans increased

THE GOVERNMENT Service Insurance System has increased the amount of emergency loan granted to members from P8,000 to P10,000 and has set aside P404 million for this purpose.

GSIS president and general manager Winston F. Garcia said that the GSIS Board approved the P2,000 increase to provide ample financial assistance to GSIS members who were affected by calamities such as typhoons, flash floods, or earthquakes.

In a press statement, GSIS said it was expecting a big number of members who will avail themselves of the increased emergency loans in the wake of storms "Gloria," "Hambalos" and "Inday" which caused property damage, injured persons and flooded streets in several parts of Luzon in the past few weeks.

On July 17, the GSIS Board approved the grant of emergency loans to members who work or reside in Tarlac (to be processed by the Tarlac Branch Office); Malabon and Valenzuela (to be processed by the Caloocan District Office); and the province of Rizal (to be processed by the Antipolo District Office).

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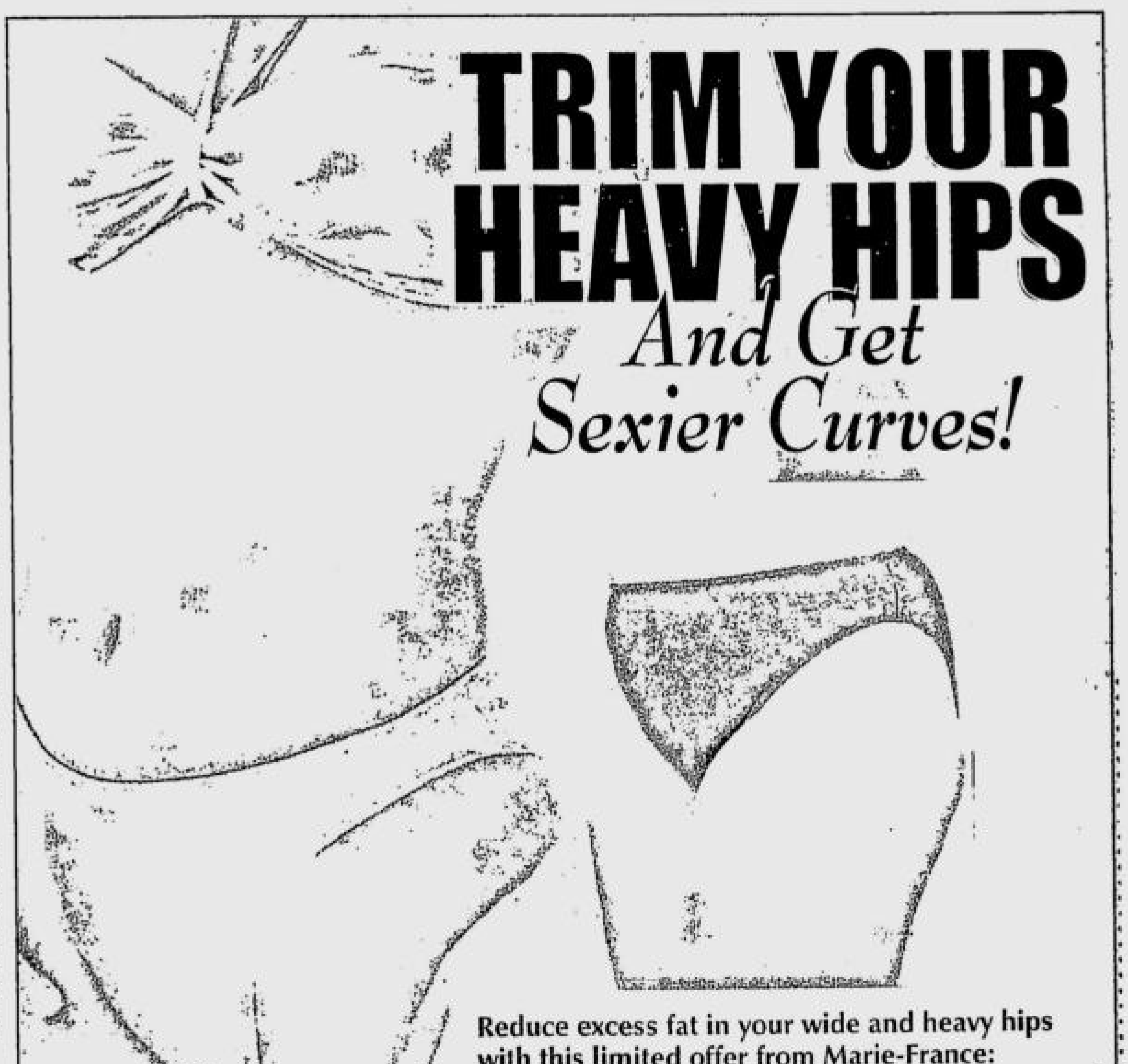

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Kaye: Rod still charging expenses to Nida account

From page A1

2001, which became the basis for the filing of new criminal charges against him, Medel and six others on July 17.

Torres said she was "doing some checking because I want to make sure that my mom was not a guarantor or signatory in any of his credit card transactions."

She also expressed doubts over Strunk's lawyers' claim that her stepfather was dirt-poor.

"He can't be penniless. I wouldn't be surprised if he had siphoned off funds belonging to my mom and made investments in the US. I suspect he did that before he left (last January) for California," Torres said.

Diversion possible?

National Bureau of Investigation spokesperson Ricardo Diaz had earlier said that Strunk could have used his wife's money to buy houses in California. "It's highly possible that he diverted substantial amounts of the victim's money abroad for his own use," Diaz said.

Strunk's lawyers had told the NBI that their client could not even afford to pay for air fare.

But NBI Direcor Reynaldo Wycoco said the lawyers, who belong to the Siguion-Reyna law firm, should fulfill their promise to bring Strunk back to the country to face criminal charges against him.

Wycoco said the bureau would bring Strunk back "whether he has money or not."

Last week, Torres said that in one three-year period, Blanca's unemployed husband racked up at least P8 million in credit card bills.

"We discovered that last March. In one credit card statement alone, there's a payment of $12,000," she said.

Torres also disclosed that shortly before she was slain, Blanca (Dorothy Jones in real life) twice attempted to cut off Strunk's access to her funds, including a current account in a PS Bank branch in Baguio City where she owned real estate.

Torres said that "aside from the funds that Rod got from my mom (during their 22-year relationship), he's been collecting from Uncle Sam (referring to social security)."

Money motive

But according to Justice Undersecretary Jose Calida, "if Strunk is really penniless, that only supports the motive angle why he would want Nida silenced because Nida wanted to leave him."

"And according to the statement of Kaye Torres, he was so dependent on her mom for financial support. I really don't know whether he's penniless or not, but I think it is of common knowledge that it was Nida who was bringing home the bread and the butter," Calida said.

Calida, who was hired by President Macapagal-Arroyo to prosecute deposed President Joseph Estrada before the Sandiganbayan, noted that the NBI had a strong case against Strunk and the other suspects, citing, among other factors, Medel's confession.

"There was an alleged recantation (at the DOJ). But as far as I know there was no formal recantation, meaning to say it was subscribed. It was just an outburst of Medel. And besides we have a law that frowns upon recantations. The courts usually give weight to the first statement rather than the recanted statement. I'm talking about jurisprudence, cases decided by the Supreme Court," Calida said.

He said that "if you look at the demeanor of Medel, you can see that it was quite unnatural for him when was he was shouting in the DOJ."

"*Mukhang* scripted *'yung* gimmick *n'ya*. *Mukhang* dramatics, histrionics," Calida said. Calida also heads the DOJ Action Center, the Task Force on Terrorism and Internal Security, Task Force on Financial Fraud and Money Laundering, and the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel.

Strunk's motion

Through his motion, Strunk also asked the DOJ to defer the issuance of a subpoena against him pending resolution of the requested exclusion or the outright dismissal of the complaint.

Medel admitted in the handwritten affidavit that he killed Blanca on orders from Strunk. He narrated in detail the events leading to the killing of Blanca at the Atlanta Center in Greehills, San Juan, last year.

But Strunk claimed that Medel had already recanted his confession during the preliminary investigation at the DOJ last November. He said that the original DOJ panel that first handled the case last year had upheld the validity of Medel's recantation.

In a resolution dated Nov. 26, 2001, he said, the DOJ panel led by State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco declared Medel's public recantation "to be a valid act."

Thus, he said, the National Bureau of Investigation and the Philippine National Police were barred from refiling the case "based essentially on the same repudiated affidavit ağainst Strunk."

"His recantation assumes much more powerful force than any other conceivable symbolism or formality. It was made in the most public and vehement terms captured by extensive media coverage before the unrestricted view of the 'whole world,'" said Strunk.

Strunk pointed out that Medel should have affirmed or "sworn to the contents" of his original statement on the scheduled preliminary investigation. "But he did not. On the contrary, he categorically rejected his affidavit, and would have certainly sworn to its falsity, as he would now most certainly swear."

Calida's analysis

"If you analyze closely (Medel's) previous statement," Calida said, "this contained a statement of facts which he only knew, like the exact position where Nida was sitting, the time that they were there (at Atlanta Center in Greenhills, San Juan). He even demonstrated how (the crime) was done."

At the same time, Calida said evidence gathered by the NBI warranted the conduct of a preliminary investigation of the murder case.

The DOJ panel probing the case has 10 days to evaluate the charges against the suspects. If a preliminary investigation is warranted, the body would subpoena Strunk, Medel and the other respondents.

"In a criminal investigation, these are the things that you should look into: who has the motive and who has the opportunity? And in this particular case, all the dots that have been connected lead to Strunk," said Calida.

Calida pointed out "there's already a web of circumstantial evidence which points to Strunk as the mastermind. And among these, according to the NBI, the purchase of the Swiss knife, the receipts showing Strunk purchasing (the knife) and the type of wounds which were compatible with the use of such kind of weapon. Also the umbrella as well as the independent key evidence or statements of certain witnesses."

"These would show that No. 1, Strunk has the motive, and No. 2, he had the opportunity," Calida said.

Who abducted Mike Martinez?

By Philip C. Tubeza

WHO really abducted businessman Mike Martinez?

The question was raised again yesterday after National Bureau of Investigation spokesperson Ricardo Diaz said Philip Medel Jr.—the confessed hitman in the Nida Blanca slay who claimed he saw Martinez in Camp Crame last year—admitted to lying.

"He told me a month after (he was taken under the bureau's custody) that he made it all up to pin down the police," Diaz said yesterday.

Diaz said he remembered replying to Medel then: "*Hayop ka, Medel.* (You beast.) You're playing with people's lives."

Medel, American Rod Strunk, and six others were charged last week for the gruesome killing of actress Nida Blanca.

The NBI considered including Martinez in the charge sheet since Medel had claimed that it was Martinez who introduced him to Strunk. But the bureau eventually decided not to include Martinez, since there was no solid evidence against the businessman. Martinez remains missing to this day.

Eight unidentified persons abducted Martinez on the morning of Nov. 19 at the Sun Valley Subdivision in Parañaque.

Martinez's family said they suspected the police was behind the abduction after Medel claimed that he saw the businessman in Camp Crame.

Medel claimed that Senior Supt. Leonardo Espina, of the police Task Force Marsha, brought Martinez before him on the night of Nov. 19.

He added that he even saw Espina punch Martinez in the stomach.

"That was the tale he told us repeatedly when he was first brought here," Diaz said.

"But a month later, he admitted to me that he made it all up," he added.

Avoiding Espina

Diaz said he even avoided Espina at first, after hearing Medel's accusations.

"I was once in this dinner with (local Federal Bureau of Investigation representative) James Nixon but I did not talk to him (Espina)," Diaz said.

"I thought then that it was (Espina's) fault that we were having a hard time solving the Blanca case," he added.

But after hearing Medel's admission that he had lied, Diaz immediately informed Espina about what Medel said.

In an ironic twist, Medel is now under arrest, not because of his alleged involvement in the killing of Blanca, but because of the libel case Espina filed against him.

"I'm also asking where Martinez is if what Medel said was not true," Diaz said.

The CIDG claimed last year that Martinez could have faked his abduction to avoid being investigated in the Blanca case. NBI sources said Martinez's accomplices might be behind the abduction. They noted that Medel has not posted bail "out of fear for his life."

It's been a week since Medel was jailed at the NBI headquarters. His bail is set at P10,000.

Yesterday, however, Salvador Panelo, Medel's lawyer, floated the idea that his client might become a state witness in the case, an NBI investigator said.

Panelo said he would have to talk first with Medel and try to convince him to cooperate with the authorities.

Panelo allegedly also asked NBI officials for "documents" about the case. Curiously, the lawyer told the NBI that the documents be given to a television network reporter.

An NBI source said the TV network provided Panelo's services and also gave Medel groceries.

UN report praises RP adherence to democracy

From page A1

you find any other country in the world where the ordinary people are so committed to democracy and ordinary people are mobilized," she said. The first "People Power" ousted dictator Ferdinand Marcos in 1986. The second deposed Joseph Estrada in January 2001.

But Fukuda-Parr warned that too much dependence on the masses could also be dangerous. "Over-reliance on people power can be dangerous and undermine democratic institutions. You need strong institutions. They are not substitutes, they are complements. The debates in the Philippines obviously touch on those tensions," she said.

Asia rising

The Human Development Report 2002, entitled "Deepening democracy in a fragmented world," concluded that the global march of democracy in the 1980s and 1990s had slowed, with many countries relapsing into authoritarianism or facing rising economic and social tensions. But the UNDP found that Asia had done better than most.

"I think that Asia has made tremendous progress in democratization in the last couple of decades," Fukuda-Parr said.

"Even though in Asia you have huge, very big regimes that are not considered democratic, they too have also been democratizing. Compared with other regions, there has been more gradual and more progressive progress in expanding human freedom," Fukuda-Parr said.

"I don't think there have been as many reversals as one has seen in many other regions in the world," she added.

Out of three groupings, most Asian countries rank in the "medium human development" group of the UNDP's Human Development Index, which measures each country's achievements in terms of life expectancy, educational attainment and adjusted real income.

The report said despite the Asian financial crisis in the late 1990s, East Asia had made striking progress over the decade, with China rising the furthest, up 14 places to rank 96 in 2002.

Singapore and South Korea have both moved up eight places, to 25 and 27 respectively. Thailand has risen 10 to rank 70 and Malaysia has gained 12 places to 59. The Philippines ranked 77.

Fukuda-Parr added that religion and culture should not be used as an excuse to deny political freedom.

"Democracy movements of China, of Burma, of Indonesia and the Philippines and elsewhere show that democracy is not something that is an imported concept in Asia," she said.

Full democracy

The UNDP report said the world is more democratic—in terms of the 140 countries that hold multiparty elections—than at any other time in history, but only 82 out of a total of nearly 200 countries examined can be considered full democracies.

Of the 81 countries that embraced democracy in the last two decades of the 20th century, only 47 are considered full democracies today, the report added.

"Many others do not seem to be in transition or have lapsed back into authoritarianism or conflict, as in Democratic Republic of Congo and Sierra Leone," it read. "Myanmar and Pakistan have returned to (a) military form of government. Failed states, like Afghanistan and Somalia, have become breeding grounds for extremism and violent conflict."

The trend appeared strongest in the sub-Saharan region, with national armies intervening in political affairs in varying degrees in one in four countries since 1989.

Deepening democracy around the world is vital in the battle against social injustice, providing a bulwark against terrorism, the report said. The UNDP said that recent research showed established democracies are less prone to civil war than non-democratic regimes, and even countries that have embraced democracy only recently are more likely to cope with political upheaval.

"The desire for stability often leads to the notion that non-democratic regimes hold out the prospect of greater public order and faster economic development," Fukuda-Parr said. "History and academic research provide no evidence that authoritarian regimes are better at promoting economic and social progress."

Referring to claims by countries such as Malaysia, Pakistan, Colombia and Kazakhstan that peace and economic prosperity must come first, the report said a democracy's nonviolent ways of resolving political conflict offer the opposition some hope that its turn may come. The report also pointed out that democratic countries almost never go to war with each other.

Still, with 38 new peacekeeping operations established since 1990, compared with only 16 between 1946 and 1989, the fabric of global peace may be fraying, the report suggested.

More women

UNDP administrator Mark Malloch Brown, who spoke at a seminar for mainly Asian parliamentarians, stressed the role of women in government to promote democracy.

He said less than 15 percent of the parliamentarians of the world were women, with Asia scoring about average.

"The representation of women in parliament or women in government, however, is not just an end in itself," Brown said, adding that involving women in the policy-making process ensured that the half of society most normally neglected had a voice.

Fukuda-Parr also said it was "really pathetic" that only 11 countries had parliaments where 30 percent of the seats were held by women.

"Major changes that have taken place in the world in terms of global policies where powerful governments have changed their minds . . . they are all movements in which women were the pre-eminent leaders or made a major rule," she said.

"One of the pervasive democratic deficits is the chronic under-representation of women . . . This is one of the central problems that I think democracy still has to face," Fukuda-Parr said.

The UNDP report also called the level of global inequality "grotesque," with the income of the world's richest 5 percent some 114 times higher than that of the poorest 5 percent.

"The Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States cast new light on these divisions, returning strategic military alliances to the center of national policy-making and inspiring heated debates on the danger of compromising human rights for national security," the report said.

"Around the world, there is a growing sense that democracy has not delivered development such as more jobs, schools, health care for ordinary people," said Fukuda-Parr.

She also said politicians have used the pain of transition to justify authoritarianism at the expense of human rights.

Reuters, AP

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Gloria moves vs firms blocking cheap drugs

By Armand N. Nocum

MULTINATIONAL drug companies face possible sanctions for allegedly violating fair trade practices in their effort to block the sale of cheap government-imported medicines in the country.

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit said President Macapagal-Arroyo has ordered Trade and Industry Secretary Mar Roxas "to study if what (the multinationals are doing) is against (our laws on) monopolies and unfair trade."

In her State of the Nation Address on Monday, the President took multinational drug companies to task for allegedly thwarting her program to make medicines imported from India—which cost half those coming from other countries—readily available in local pharmacies.

"We are studying punitive measures to correct this unfair, unjust and heartless situation," the President had said, adding that so far only Unilab, a large multinational, has heeded her call.

Ms Macapagal had said that "local commercial stores (with wider distribution networks), under pressure from the multinational drug companies, will not sell our cheaper medicines."

Dayrit said, "We got feedback from the drugstore owners themselves that the multinationals would not allow them to sell the cheaper drugs because they directly compete with their products."

Although the cheaper drugs are now being sold in 72 government hospitals and rolling stores of the National Food Authority, they remain out of the reach of most Filipinos because pharmacies are unwilling to sell them.

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Drive to lure tourists shifts to high gear

TOURISM Secretary Richard Gordon is on a "frenzied" campaign to lure more visitors to the Philippines, which was recently declared International Tourist Destination for 2003 by the World Tourism Organization.

Gordon is wrapping up promotional trips to Australia and the United States. He said there would be "sales missions" to Japan, Korea, China and Europe.

The marketing campaign, Gordon said, is designed to overcome the negative perception of the Philippines and the general lack of awareness of the country.

The goal is to replace the negative image with "positive images of unique Philippine destinations and culture," he said.

The DOT is also banking on the crowd-drawing power of celebrities to lure tourists to the country.

Edwin Trompeta, DOT regional director in Western Visayas, said the personalities will be featured on posters and brochures of tourist destinations.

Trompeta said actors Joyce Jimenez and Ruffa Mae Quinto will endorse the mango-rich province of Guimaras and world-famous Boracay island, respectively.

Singer and actor Vina Morales who hails from Bogo, Cebu, is being eyed to promote the province while young actor Claudine Barretto would be asked to appear on posters promoting Iloilo where her family is from.

Model Lucy Torres, a scion of a landed clan in Ormoc City, Leyte, is being tapped to appear on posters of Leyte with her husband, actor Richard Gomez, and their daughter Juliana.

Popular singer Kuh Ledesma, from Negros Occidental, is being eyed to promote her home province.

The DOT also announced that tourist arrivals from Japan and Korea have been on the upswing in the last couple of years despite "unfavorable world economic conditions."

Figures showed tourists from Japan numbered 343,840 while those from Korea totaled 207,957 for the period, next only to the tourist arrivals from the United States, the DOT said.

Gordon said the department will be focusing on China, whose tourists are expected to balloon to 100 million by 2020. ***Jerome Aning, with Nestor P. Burgos, PDI Visayas Bureau***

'Look' gives away fake lovers at Naia

"SHE didn't have the 'look' in her eyes," said an immigration officer, by way of explaining what drew government agents to suspect a foreign couple posing as lovers were in reality terror suspects trying to sneak into the country.

Immigration officer Rudy David said two Iranians, who had tried to pass themselves off as Italian lovers, were turned back at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport after authorities noticed something amiss in their romantic demeanor at the immigration queue.

David said the two, Ahmad Aony, 47, and Zolikha Rostami, 30, "were holding hands and were even kissing, but this is fast becoming a modus operandi to throw off any suspicion."

"Also, she didn't have the 'look' in her eyes," he added.

An airport source said Aony and Rostami resembled two international terrorist suspects, whose pictures were with local immigration authorities.

In a report to Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo, David said Aony and Rostami arrived on Tuesday from Bangkok, Thailand. It was there, he said, the "couple" admitted they had bought their fake Italian passports for $1,000 each.

He said this was the second time immigration agents had caught two foreign citizens, posing as a couple, with fake travel documents.

"We also became suspicious when we learned they had Italian passports when they didn't exactly look like Europeans," David said.

Upon questioning, the "couple" initially tried to continue their bluff by saying they were in Manila to spend their honeymoon. They also said they were planning to go to the United States after their vacation here.

When pressed by agents, however, David said Aony and Rostami admitted they were not a couple. They said they had bought the Italian passports in Bangkok.

"We also found their Iranian passports, with fake Philippine visas," David said. Aony's Iranian passport was hidden in one of his shoes, he said.

The two were placed on a return flight to Bangkok and were not held for further questioning in connection with their possible terrorist ties since "they were not carrying guns or bombs," an official said. ***Norman Bordadora***

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Comelec draws flak for car purchase

By Juliet L. Javellana and Blanche Rivera

TWO House leaders yesterday chided commissioners of the Commission on Elections for their purchase of expensive vehicles with taxpayers' money.

Camarines Sur Rep. Rolando Andaya, chair of the House appropriations committee, said the purchase of the million-peso vehicles at a time when the government was running on a deficit was "gross insensitivity" and abuse of the Comelec's fiscal autonomy.

"There is no defense to this extravagance," Andaya said, adding that only the President needs a fleet of vehicles to drive her around.

Andaya said that on top of the "car-buying spree," the commissioners had been assigned at least two service vehicles each.

Two commissioners even forced the poll body to purchase the vehicles from a favored dealer. According to Comelec records, Commissioner Resureccion Borra had ordered the Comelec administrative services to buy the Venture vans from Juno Cars instead of Advan Motors, the firm that offered the lowest bid.

Commissioner Rufino Javier, who was acting Comelec chair when the purchase was approved, had also insisted that the cars be bought from Juno, Borra said.

'Friends'

Borra had said Javier "apparently had friends' in Juno Cars.

In the end, the purchase was divided by Juno and Advan.

"The deal was not disadvantageous, but it is interesting to note why they are insisting on Juno Cars Inc.," a Comelec source said.

Negros Occidental Rep. Jun Lozada, chair of the House foreign affairs committee, said such "unnecessary expenses" were alarming in the face of the President's belt-tightening measures.

"Maybe the purchase could not wait but they should have bought less expensive vehicles," Lozada said.

Lozada noted reports that the Comelec bought two Nissan Cefiro Elite worth P1.35 million each; four Chevrolet Venture worth P1.167 each; and a Toyota Hi-Ace Super Grandia worth P1.18 million.

Andaya said the excuse used by some Comelec commissioners that they needed to travel comfortably and had to replace their three-year-old vehicles was baloney.

Austerity call

"The right of their aching backs ends where the need to conserve public finances begins," Andaya said in a statement.

He said all officials, regardless of what branch of government they belong to, should heed the call for austerity.

Andaya said the General Appropriations Act of 2002 imposes a ban on the purchase of motor vehicles except police and military patrol vehicles, ambulances and vehicles for the use of the President, the Senate President, the Chief Justice and the Speaker of the House.

But Comelec, given its fiscal autonomy, can realign its budget to cover items it deems necessary, Andaya said.

Andaya said he was using a second-hand vehicle that was 10 years old and had 150,000 km mileage but that he would not use public funds to buy a new vehicle.

But Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr. said the purchase of the Comelec vehicles was justified.

Pichay said what the Comelec commissioners bought were not luxury vehicles but utility vehicles.

He said luxury vehicles are the Jaguar, Mercedez Benz or BMW which cost more than P2 million each.

"You have to relate the vehicle to the office that you hold. These are Comelec commissioners so these vehicles are justified," Pichay said.

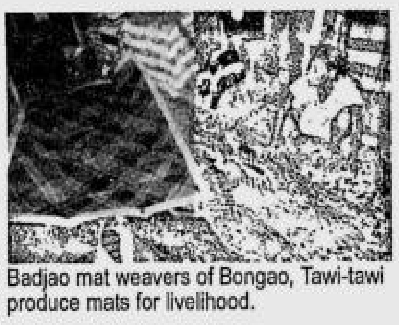
Residents of Patikul, Sulu can now enjoy glasses of clean drinking water... Badjao weavers of Tawi-tawi are now organized aiming to have as many people recognize and patronize their products... and the sick, afflicted children of Basilan can now seek treatment in health centers and be provided with medicines.

These are just a few groups of people who represent Filipinos trapped in the hostility-ridden areas of Mindanao but are now walking the path to recovery. They have begun building a semblance of what was once a normal life. Many partners have been working with Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) in this journey to peace and development.

The Annual President GMA - PBSP Cup

Bringing together leaders committed to living and giving

One of Mindanao's partners is the First President GMA-PBSP Cup, a fundraising golf tournament held June of last year at the Manila Golf and Country Club. PBSP organized the tournament which raised P19 million in support of its Mindanao Peace and Development Program. Over a hundred business leaders were united in response to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's thrust to improve the standard of living in what was called the Second Mindanao. The Second Mindanao is composed of areas that suffer from too much poverty and a lingering armed conflict that is in stark contrast to the relative stability and wealth of most provinces in the South.


Badjao mat weavers of Bongao, Tawi-tawi produce mats for livelihood.

Catch Up Plan for the Second Mindanao

PBSP's Mindanao Peace and Development Program is a ten-year endeavor estimated to cost P851 million to be able to make an impact in the lives of 1.3 million poor households in these conflict areas and contribute to the government's effort for peace and economic recovery. The proceeds of the 1st President GMA-PBSP Cup were allocated for intervention and assistance within the four key components of the Program: Constituency Building, Governance and Popular Participation, Land Security, Productivity and Income Improvement, and Investment in Human Capital.

Adult Moslems attend literacy classes to effectively engage in livelihood programs.

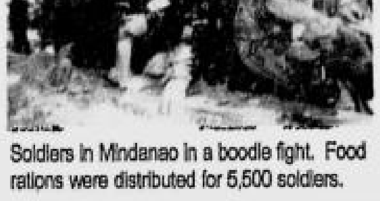
Constituency Building creates partners among stakeholders in Mindanao to promote understanding of their inherent cultural diversity. A three-year project worth more than P1.7 million was earmarked from the 1st President GMA-PBSP Cup proceeds to build the capacities of development partners in Basilan and Sulu in community mobilization, enterprise development, organizational strengthening, project development, management and networking.

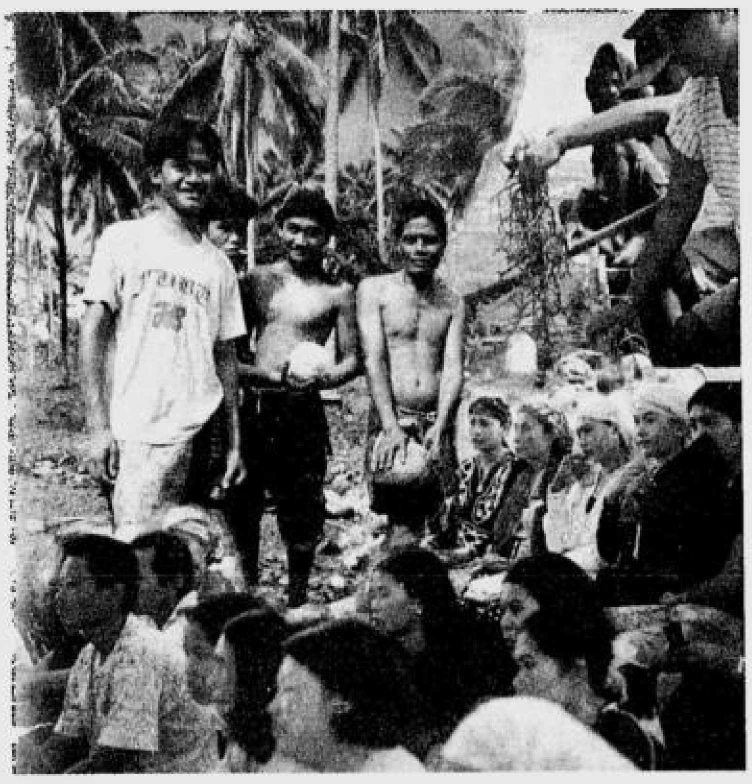
Land Security, Productivity and Income Improvement builds programs to answer land tenure issues, establish sustainable livelihood, improved productivity and enterprise development. Badjao mat weavers in Tawi-tawi were allocated with P347,000 by the 1st President GMA-PBSP Cup to contribute to the efforts of mobilizing them into viable producers of woven materials.

The *Investment in Human Capital* component implements literacy programs and advances the delivery of health services. Around P180,000 went to the re-opening of health centers and medical assistance projects in Basilan and Sulu. The community was also organized to participate, health volunteers were trained and medical supplies were provided.

The Kasiglahan Children's Shelter Project in Kidapawan City was designated P300,000 to help provide a safe place for street children and women in crisis as they undergo intervention to uplift their condition.

Five hundred fifty households in Patikul, Sanraymundo and Amanat Learning Center, all in Jolo, Sulu, will now have access to potable drinking water with the installation of a P350,000 worth water system.


Soldiers in Mindanao in a boodle fight. Food rations were distributed for 5,500 soldiers.



The 1st President GMA-PBSP Cup also granted Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo with P10 million for a beneficiary of her choice. The President supported the military campaign against the insurgents and terrorists in Mindanao as a strategic part of the government's peace initiative. PBSP was mandated to appropriate said amount for the food ration of 5,500 soldiers in various areas of Mindanao.

"Corporations doing their part to be responsive to the needs of the times—this is the spirit behind the President GMA-PBSP Cup. The tournament is just one of PBSP's projects where companies work together in the battle against poverty," PBSP Chair and PLDT President & Chief Executive Officer Manuel V. Pangilinan said.

Creating Sustainable Jobs

This year, PBSP is taking on the challenge of supporting PBSP Trustee and Presidential Adviser for Creating One Million Jobs Luis P. Lorenzo, Jr. in his task to create a million jobs by the year 2004.

The *A Million Jobs Program* of the government is a daunting task. According to the April 2002 Philippine Labor Force Survey by the National Statistics Office, unemployment shot up to 13.9%. In absolute terms, 4.87 million workers in the Philippines still have no jobs. At the same time, underemployment is at 19.6% translating to 5.92 million Filipinos without sustainable jobs.

"We recognize that we have to do more than talk about the commitments. We have to act and find solutions to achieve our goals. Part of the talk is to encourage the private sector to join the campaign but we have to work to get them to actually commit resources to initiate projects for job creation. Private sector participation is very critical to this campaign," says Lorenzo.

The 2nd President GMA-PBSP Cup, dubbed *Swing for A Million Jobs*, aims to raise funds for micro-enterprise and livelihood projects particularly in rural areas nationwide and provide opportunities for sustainable jobs.

To support employment among the disadvantaged sector of the communities, viable enterprise projects will be supported like coco coir production, manufacturing and marketing, socialized housing, marketing of processed foods, grains processing, marketing and merchandizing, and gmelina lumber production and marketing, among others.

More than a hundred business leaders from member and non-member companies have given their generous support to the 2nd President GMA-PBSP Cup. They all share the belief that a united effort from the business front can help swing the present problem of unemployment to a more positive rate and bring about substantial contribution to the realization of a million and more jobs.

NON-PERFORMER

Fire tax chief, Gloria urged

FOR BEING P27 billion shy of his collection target, the commissioner of the Bureau of Internal Revenue should be fired for incompetence and non-performance, a leading member of the House of Representatives said yesterday.

Rep. Aniceto G. Saludo Jr. of Southern Leyte asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to dismiss BIR Commissioner Rene Bañez, whom he described as "a dud, a certified NPA—non-performing asset."

The BIR, Saludo said, had committed to collect P222.5 billion from January to June this year. But, citing reports of the Bureau of Treasury, Saludo said actual collection for the six-month period reached only P195.62 billion for a shortfall of P26.9 billion.

Saludo's call for the BIR chief's ouster was the latest from the House recently. Last month, Speaker Jose de Venecia and three other congressmen asked the President to sack Bañez and institute a top-to-bottom revamp of the BIR because of its "dismal performance."

Saludo said the collection program drawn up by Bañez and his deputies called for the Large Taxpayers' Service (LTS), the Large Taxpayers District Office (LTDO) and the Excise Tax Service (ETS) to collect 61 percent of total BIR target and the regional offices to collect the remaining 39 percent.

"Bañez and his lieutenants failed miserably," Saludo said.

A failure

Quoting the BIR Collection Performance Monitor for the period from January to May, the three offices collected only P92.1 billion, lower by P7.2 billion compared to the same period last year. The same collection also fell short of the target of P116 billion by P23.9 billion, which is equivalent to a 20.62 percent deficit, Saludo said.

On the other hand, Saludo said, the regional offices delivered P76 billion, registering a surplus of P1.5 billion over their goal.

For the first six months of the year, Saludo said, the BIR suffered shortfalls for five months. It registered a slim surplus only once—in February.

Saludo said the President's State of the Nation Address was another indication of why Bañez should be sacked.

"In her Sona last year, President Arroyo broke tradition to include, name and praise Bañez and his so-called 'capabilities' to clean up the BIR and improve its performance. However, the President's Sona last Monday was embarrassingly silent on Bañez," Saludo said.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, July 25, 2002
St. James, Apostle
1st Reading: 2 Cor 4:7-15
Gospel: Mt 20:20-28

The mother of James and John came to Jesus with her sons, and she knelt down to ask a favor. Jesus said to her, "What do you want?" And she answered, "Here you have my two sons. Grant that they may sit, one at your right and one at your left, when you are in your kingdom."

Jesus said to the brothers, "You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink the cup that I am about to drink?" They answered, "We can." Jesus replied, "You will indeed drink my cup, but to sit at my right or at my left is not for me to grant. That will be for those for whom the Father has prepared it."

The other ten heard all this and were angry with the two brothers. Then Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the nations act as tyrants, and the powerful oppress them. It shall not be so among you; whoever wants to be more important in your group shall make himself your servant. And if you want to be first, make yourself the servant of all. Be like the Son of Man who has come, not to be served but to serve and to give his life to redeem many."

Commentary

We belong to the same church, but it is common for the many organizations in our parishes to have intramurals and competitions as to which association is the best. We publish the good things that we do while some even go to the extent of saying that such a group or such people are not doing well enough in the parish. Because of this, a number of would-be Catholics are turned off from their inspiration to believe, even as many other parishioners are scandalized by such zeal in rivalry and competition! Christianity is not a contest; it is putting the Gospel message into practice. Christianity is the formation of a community of sisters and brothers, living as God's family and working together as a sign of God's offer of life and love in the world.

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SUPREME COURT GUIDELINES

LABOR LAW (TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT)/POLITICAL LAW (CIVIL SERVICE LAW)—Appointment and reassignment—Appointment should be distinguished from reassignment. An appointment may be defined as the selection, by the authority vested with the power, of an individual who is to exercise the functions of a given office. When completed, usually with its confirmation, the appointment results in security of tenure for the person chosen unless he is replaceable at pleasure because of the nature of his office. On the other hand, a reassignment is merely a movement of an employee from one organizational unit to another in the same department or agency which does not involve a reduction in rank, status or salary and does not require the issuance of an appointment. In the same vein, a designation connotes merely the imposition of additional duties on an incumbent official. [Citations omitted.] [*En Banc*, Justice Ynares-Santiago, Osea v. Malaya, G.R. No. 139821, January 30, 2002]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA

GMA hints Alvarez on way out

By D. Pazzibugan

IF PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's reaction was any indication, it appears Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez is on his way out.

The President was asked during a luncheon with Palace reporters yesterday if she thought that Alvarez would be finally confirmed by the Commission on Appointments.

Ms Macapagal's reaction was to laugh when a reporter commented that Alvarez's confirmation was "long overdue."

"Well taken," she said, emphasizing each word.

When asked directly if Alvarez was on the way out, she replied, "*Magdi*-discern *muna ako* (I'll study it). I will ask God," she said, laughing some more.

In contrast, the President said she was sure newly appointed Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye's confirmation will go smoothly.

Alvarez had more on his mind than his repeated rejection by the CA.

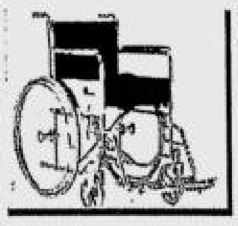
Yesterday, in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, publicly listed logging and paper company Picop Resources Inc. accused Alvarez of attempting to solicit a bribe from the firm in exchange for a presidential warranty on a logging concession.

Picop claimed that Alvarez had invited company president Teodoro Bernardino to a meeting on April 28 in Suite 1702 of the Manila Hotel.

"In the meeting, Alvarez confirmed the conversion was a completed process, that he was willing to recognize the presidential warranty but he wanted 'something substantial' before he would approve Picop's harvesting plan," the disclosure said.

In an interview yesterday, Alvarez dismissed Picop's accusation as a blatant lie and a last-ditch attempt to get a new logging permit.

He confirmed the meeting with Bernardino, but said he only informed the latter that he did not find it feasible to approve Picop's request for a presidential warranty. ***With Doris C. Dumlao***



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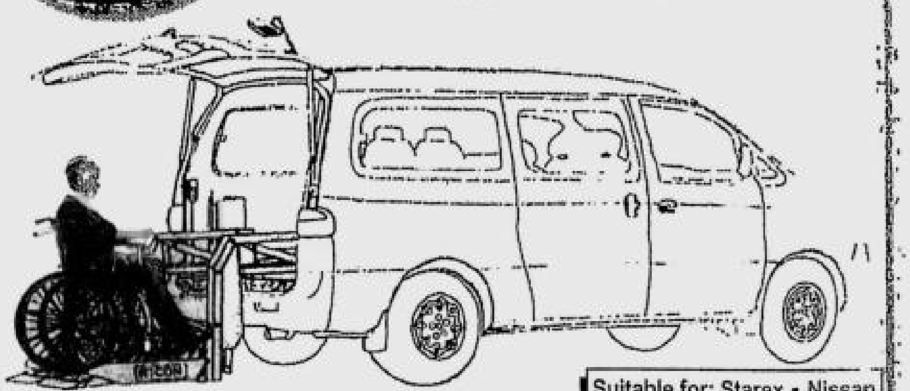

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Barangay bets ran for economic reasons—Comelec

DAVAO CITY—Don't be fooled by the big number of candidates in the July 15 barangay elections in southern Mindanao.

Commission on Elections regional director Lirio Joquiño said most of the 62,000 candidates in the region did not run because they had suddenly become politically aware.

Joquiño said most of the candidates belonged to the lower income bracket and apparently saw the chance to better their lot by running for barangay positions that paid from P2,000 to P11,000 per month.

"(Their reasons were) economic in the sense that the candidates saw the elections as an opportunity to receive incentives and honoraria once elected," Joquiño said.

She said barangay chairmen earned from P9,000 to P11,000 per month, while *kagawads* (councilmen) received from P2,000 and up.

Juqioño said the high number of bets was indicative of the worsening economic condition in the country. She said the number of barangay candidates was the biggest in years in the region.

Joquiño said that based on Comelec statistics, the elections also saw a higher voter turnout in areas where the *masa* (masses) reside.

She said this could be because of the perception of the masses that politics could alleviate their condition.

Another trend the Comelec noticed, Joquiño said, was the low number of incumbents who were reelected.

She said this could indicate the electorate has reached a higher level of political maturity and were clamoring for changes in governance. ***Joel B. Escovilla, PDI Mindanao***

Sona battlecry was line from 'Gladiator'

"STAY with me," Maximus Decimus Meridius, former general of the Roman armies to the North, implored his gladiators in the Oscars' 2001 Best Picture.

"Stay with me," Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, President of the Philippines from Central Luzon, implored her countrymen in her 2002 State of the Nation Address.

President Macapagal herself said yesterday that her rallying cry in Monday's Sona was, in fact, from the landmark Ridley Scott-Russell Crowe movie.

At a luncheon with Malacañang reporters, the President, a "certified movie buff," heartily laughed as she recalled the exact scene. "He was in the coliseum. He asked the other gladiators, 'Stay with me, we will win.'"

And so, while the theme "Strong Republic" was inspired by her father's inaugural speech in 1960, Ms Macapagal had more cinematic ideas about the Sona's last line.

The President might have imagined herself in Maximus' shoes battling bloodthirsty adversaries and hecklers, although of course she called hers, "termites."

Ms Macapagal saw another movie Tuesday night: "'MIB 2," about extra-terrestrial pests.

"When I want to relax, I watch a movie," she said. "I did not schedule a dinner (Tuesday night) so I could rest my mind."

But "tough" is still the buzzword for Gladiator GMA.

She said the police's handling of anti-government protesters during Monday's Sona would be the last of maximus ... er, maximum tolerance.

"Maximum tolerance is not required by law," she said. "It's a policy decision."

What was it that Maximus Decimus Meridius said in another highlight of the movie? "I will have my revenge, whether in this life or the next." **Carlito Pablo**

Ramos burial

THE REMAINS of Julieta Maniaul Ramos, former head of the personnel department of the Philippine National Construction Corp., will be interred on Saturday at 9:30 a.m. at the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina.

Ms Ramos, wife of Severino Ramos, formerly of the Government Service Insurance System, died on Monday at the age of 78. She is survived by her husband; daughter Gracia; grandchildren Gladys and Ian; sisters Luz, Rebecca and Josefina, and other relatives.

Her other sisters, now deceased, were Pacita M. Yambot, Mercedes M. Diaz and Iluminada M. Ramos.

The body lies at the Cosmopolitan Church at 1368 Taft Ave. corner Apacible Street, Manila, across from the Philippine General Hospital.

Ms Ramos was a consultant of the Development Academy of the Philippines in the late 1980s and of Parsons Engineering Co. in 1993. She taught in the University of the East and Trinity College.

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INQUIRER
Vol. 17 No. 227
ISSN
0116-2642

OPINION

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THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INC. has its business and editorial offices at
•Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
•P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
•Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
•Editoral Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 •Advertising 897-4807
•Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.

Publisher ISAGANI YAMBOT
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New directions

EDITORIAL

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's second State of the Nation Address outlined the direction toward building a "strong republic." The steps may be classified into short-term and long-term objectives.

The first consists of using the police or coercive powers of the state to combat crime and corruption. The second concerns the continuing "war" on poverty. These objectives rest on the framework of, first, the independence of the state from class and sectoral interests, and second, the "capacity, represented through strong institutions and a strong bureaucracy, to execute good policy and deliver essential services."

In plain language, the goals of the reoriented vision of the administration seek to enhance the capacity of the state to deliver services, including poverty alleviation and promotion of economic growth. That capacity is the hall mark of a "strong republic."

The President said a strong republic "does what it says," and on law and order, she vowed to "break the back of terrorism and criminality." The objective has been set: to crush criminal syndicates engaged in kidnap for ransom and drug trafficking. Thus, the coercive instruments of the state, led by the Philippine National Police and the prosecution arm of the government, have been mobilized behind this campaign. This is a doable target and the success of the campaign can be measured within a specific timeframe. Last year's war on crime showed negligible results. The President has to do better this time. Otherwise, the tough rhetoric on this critical aspect of state rebuilding will burst like an over-puffed balloon.

Poverty reduction is the toughest nut to crack. The administration claims to have created a million jobs in agriculture and fisheries but this hardly made a dent on poverty alleviation. The problem of enhancing state capacity to spur economic growth is tied to the ability of the government to raise revenues to finance services and development.

The prospects in this area are bleak. The day after Ms Macapagal claimed in her speech that the Philippine economy had the strongest growth record in Southeast Asia, the administration admitted that the budget deficit had risen to P119.72 billion during the first six months, or 91 percent of the P130-billion target for the entire year. It does not help the administration to say that if the Estrada administration had not been toppled, the deficit would have been bigger. The revenue collection machinery is not delivering on revenue targets and the shortfall is increasing. No matter what the government says about the capacity to raise revenue, it has neither increased collection nor transformed the Bureau of Internal Revenue, which accounts for 80 percent of collections, into an effective tool for giving the government the means to achieve its goal of delivering and expanding public services and the economy.

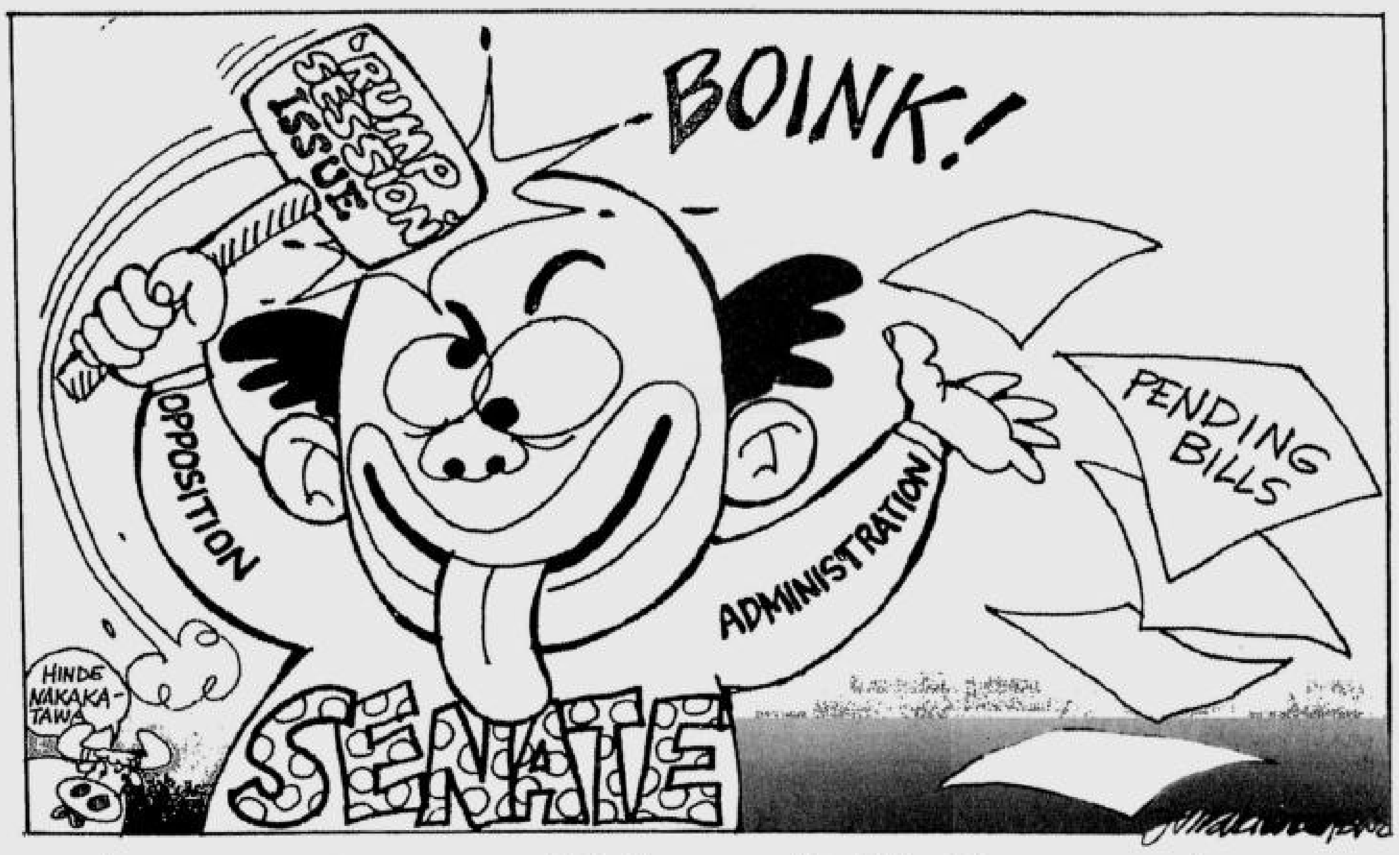
The President was realistic enough in saying that she is not building the edifice of a strong republic in one broad stroke. She said she is building an edifice by laying one stone upon another. What is important is that her administration is addressing a more fundamental issue than merely setting micro-objectives with identifiable targets and tangible results, which she did during her first Sona.

There will be powerful obstacles to the objective of making the state independent from class and sectoral interests. The President is striking at the heart of the oligarchic structure of the economy and, in aligning the sectoral interests behind her programs, she will have to depend more on negotiations than on the coercive powers of the state.

She should remember that when her father, President Diosdado Macapagal, attacked the power of the sugar oligarchy, the conflict polarized sectoral economic interests against his administration and these interests, aligned with the Nacionalista Party, were partly responsible for his defeat in 1965.

With the rise of non-governmental organizations as actors in pushing for reforms and in reducing the power of the oligarchy, Ms Macapagal has found natural allies in the campaign for reforms. But because she has disenchanted some of the reform constituencies, her capacity to fight entrenched interests has been hampered.

The President has assigned to herself the monumental task of changing the distribution of power in society. One can only wish her success.



Gokongwei Group or JG Summit, it's the same banana

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE PLDT deal between First Pacific Co. Ltd., and the Gokongwei Group and JG Summit Holdings Inc. is getting messier. Their memorandum of agreement (MOA) submitted to the Securities and Exchange Commission contains erasures and is reportedly different from the MOA submitted by First Pacific to the United States SEC. This prompted SEC Chair Lilia R. Bautista to ask taipan John Gokongwei to explain the discrepancy. The erasures could be seen as an attempt to mislead the SEC on the involvement of JG Summit Holdings in the $925-million joint venture with Hong Kong-based First Pacific.

The deal involves the sale to Gokongwei of the 24.6 percent stake of First Pacific in the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and its real estate interests in Fort Bonifacio. JG Summit cannot take over the PLDT stake as that would violate PLDT's by-laws and a host of other laws against monopolies and the deregulation of the telecommunication industry.

JG Summit holds a significant stake in Digitel, the second biggest landline operator in the country. If it takes over a huge chunk of PLDT, too, that would create a monopoly, which is what the telecom deregulation seeks to prevent. Other PLDT stockholders, such as Manny Pangilinan, who is First Pacific's nominee to PLDT, Tonyboy Cojuangco and Ambassador Alfonso Yuchengco, are opposing the Gokongwei takeover.

Perhaps to get around this obstacle, the name of JG Summit was scratched out on the signature page of the copy of the MOA submitted to the SEC. I have a copy of that MOA. It was signed by Gokongwei himself. Above his signature was typed: "For and on behalf of The Gokongwei Family and JG Summit Holdings Inc." The words "Family and JG Summit Holdings Inc." were crossed out with a ballpen and the word "Group" was written in longhand above the word "Family."

This is apparently an attempt to make it appear that JG Summit is not involved in the deal and to go around the prohibition against conflicts of interest and monopolies.

But on the opening page of the MOA, the second paragraph reads:

"The Gokongwei Group and JG Summit Holdings Inc., a corporation organized under the laws of the Philippines, together with address at c/o 43rd floor Robinson's Equitable Tower, ADB Avenue corner Poveda Street, Ortigas Center, Pasig City, Philippines (hereinafter the 'JG Group')." This paragraph speaks for itself.

The MOA copy submitted to the US SEC by First Pacific's executive director Ronald Brown does not have the same corrections and Bautista is miffed. It doesn't "sound right that he had submitted to us something different from that submitted to the US SEC. He should have known better," she said.

Gokongwei lawyer Perry Pe explained that the correction in the document to exclude JG Summit had been made at the last minute and that the group "failed to correct the other copy because they were rushing." How interesting.

And Brown, in his July 19, 2002 letters to Gokongwei which were submitted to the SEC said "there never was any intention that JG Summit Holdings Inc. itself would be a contracting party to the proposed joint venture" and "there never was, and continues to be, any intention on our part that JG Summit Holdings Inc. itself would be a contracting party to the proposed joint venture, or in the MOA." Really interesting.

Do you believe that? This is a billion-dollar MOA. "Could such a glaring imperfection really escape the usual meticulous eyes of their lawyers, especially Ron Brown of First Pacific?" asked a PLDT lawyer. "If so, this could be the sloppiest billion-dollar MOA in corporate history. If they never really intended to include JG Summit Holdings Inc. as a party to the MOA, why didn't they just hit the delete button and take it out?"

"JG Summit being named as a party to the MOA and John Gokongwei himself signing for and on behalf of JG Summit is the proverbial 'smoking gun,'" he said. "John Gokongwei scratching out JG Summit from a legally binding document and filing it with the Philippine SEC seem like a desperate attempt to cover up the truth. Expunging something from a document is tantamount to falsification."

But Brown has repeatedly stressed that the reference to JG Summit in the MOA was purely "descriptive" in nature and was not intended in any manner to make it a party to the agreement. That word "descriptive" now is in the same class as Enron's "creative accounting" to describe its fudging of financial figures.

As to why First Pacific did not similarly scratch out JG Summit Holdings Inc. from the signature page of the MOA they filed with the US SEC, PLDT's legal team speculates that First Pacific's US counsel, Simpton Thatcher & Bartlett, did not agree, and advised against, the deletion of the reference to JG Summit on the signature page because it would not be in accord with the truth. The US counsel might not have wanted to have anything to do with such "cover-up" since that would expose the firm to a violation of US securities regulations and make it a party to a falsification of public documents, and would make it violate the rules on legal ethics.

But why split hairs? The Gokongwei Group and JG Summit Holdings Inc. are the same banana: "JG" in JG Summit stands for John Gokongwei. Whether it is "JG Summit" or "The Gokongwei Group" that takes over PLDT, that would still be a monopoly because of Digitel and Gokongwei.

Champion

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

FIRST off, my condolences to Django Bustamante for the loss of his eight-month-old child. That happened when Django was playing midway in the World Pool Championship in Cardiff. Word then was that he would pull out and take the next flight back to Manila. He decided to stay, however, making short shrift of compatriots, Antonio Lining and Bata Reyes and Taiwanese Ching-Shun Yang.

I didn't see the game between Django and Yang, but I saw the 24-year-old Yang demolish snooker champion, Steve Davis, and I agreed with the commentators that he would be world champion soon. He didn't just play efficiently, he played artistically. He moved with the grace of a cat, and made shots from every angle. After Mika Immonen fell (9-ball is also a matter of luck, though as chess grandmasters say, the good player is always lucky), I thought Yang would be the thorn in the Filipinos' side. But Bustamante trounced him 11-7, and it made me feel the way the Brazilians felt when they barged into the finals of the World Cup.

And Django did so while lugging a great weight in his mind, or soul. As a parent, I can imagine the pain that losing a child, an infant notwithstanding, can bring. It's something that can drive you mad. As a spectator, I could not imagine how Django dealt with it. It required depths of resources I myself cannot claim to possess, suspending reality, cauterizing the pain for a while to concentrate on the task at hand. Maybe his religiosity helped; he was certain his child's spirit hovered over him in that battlefield. Maybe his patriotism helped; his presence there took on for him whole new worlds of meaning, he was no longer just playing for himself, he was playing for his country.

There and then, I thought the World Pool Championship was over. It had already produced a winner, whatever the results of the finals were. It had already produced a champion, whoever emerged into the light when the smoke cleared. He was Django Bustamante, Filipino.

I continued to feel that way even after Django lost to Earl Strickland last Sunday, in what proved to be a match worthy of the championship. And one he might have won. It was anybody's game, no one leading by more than three racks at any time. The breaks just didn't go for Django, or one crucial break when he scratched his cue ball on the break while leading 15-13. *Sayang.* But it changed nothing—at least in my book. Strickland would enter the official records as winner of the 2002 contest, but Django would enter people's hearts, or memories, as the real champion there.

There is a lesson to be gleaned from all this, a lesson this nation would do well to learn. It is a lesson in winning.

As talent goes, we are a people that are not lacking in talent. We are in fact brimming with it. I remember one particularly brilliant demonstration of it in the game that pitted Bata Reyes against Dennis Orcullo ("Orculow," the commentators kept saying; it's not just Filipino TV announcers who really ought to do their homework). Reyes was leading 8-3 in a race to nine and Orcullo was stymied by a position that seemed to offer no prospects. The cue ball was on one side of the long table and the target well on the other side, and the other balls were strewn about blocking the path to the pockets. The commentators had just analyzed the best ways Orcullo could play safety when he did what they never expected. He made a bank shot, sending the target all the way back, missing obstacles by a hair's breadth, and dropping into his left side pocket clean as a whistle.

"Of course," said one of the commentators after a speechless moment, "I didn't count on Filipino creativity."

Unfortunately, neither do we, at least in daily life. Not even when Filipino creativity is there for all to see. In music, in painting, even in science and business, as Filipinos abroad have routinely demonstrated. You don't have to go very far to see the burst of Filipino creativity, you need only look at what he has done to the Jeep and the clothes he was made to wear in colonial times. The Jeep he has turned into the jeepney, that very utile, if often undisciplined, and very colorful, if often *baduy*, contraption on the road. The transparent clothes he was made to wear by the Americans to make sure he wasn't concealing any knives, he has turned into the national attire, the barong tagalog. That's genius.

Unfortunately, that ingenuity has been employed more to achieve disingenuous ends than admirable ones. That ingenuity has been used to cut corners, skirt the rules, make *palusot*. The fact that this country has a plethora of lawyers hasn't made it more law-abiding, it has made it more lawless. Enough to make you think we take up law only so we can get around it. Filipino creativity hasn't always been used to enrich the country, it has also been used, more often than not, to pillage the country. There's another word for Filipino creativity, and that is "*abilidad,*" with all its unsavory connotations.

That's where we can learn something from Django Bustamante. In the end, our greatest enemy is not other people, it is ourselves. Or to paraphrase Cassius, it is not in our opponents, but in ourselves, that we are underlings. If we could only master ourselves, if we could only find the resources to see us through our darkest hour, if we could only find the character to bear the oppression that weighs on our mind, or soul, to face the task at hand, there would be no limits to what we could do. If we could only conquer ourselves, if we could only tame our impulse, or instinct, to use our creativity for destructive ends, if we could only temper our minds or soul amid the heaviest grief or affliction to face the battle, we could conquer anything.

That's what champions are made of.

Cool heads and hot heads

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

WHAT happened at the Senate last Tuesday, the first working day after the opening of Congress, was a typically Pinoy approach to a problem, and as Sen. Francis Pangilinan noted, it was both a strength and a weakness. The day began with a breakfast meeting between Senate President Franklin Drilon and Majority Leader Loren Legarda, and opposition Senators Edgardo Angara and Aquilino Pimentel. They agreed that in the interest of peace, both sides would not press the issue of the legality of the June 3-6 sessions held by the opposition, and project instead a "working Senate," taking up the bills that were not discussed during the rump sessions, such as the SPAV bill. The opposition also proposed to recognize Legarda, which augured well for the chamber as it meant a pre-June 3 status quo.

In the afternoon, however, while the administration coalition was holding a caucus at the Manila Hotel, some opposition members were quoted in the media as saying that Legarda was unacceptable. An opposition proposal to declare all Senate positions beginning with the post of president pro tempore vacant was rejected outright by Drilon. Later Angara and Pimentel came back to Drilon to tell him that they couldn't get their colleagues to support their own proposal to accept Legarda as majority leader. The buzz is that Sen. Panfilo Lacson led the opposition hotheads.

* * *

Meanwhile the administration senators restlessly loitered in the session hall, waiting for their opposition colleagues to show up. After a while, some hotheads got impatient and said they wouldn't wait forever. Pangilinan mused that "the opposition didn't know how to handle victory last June 3 and now they also didn't know how to handle defeat." Some senators urged Drilon to start the session after Sen. Ramon Revilla arrived and tackle the legality issue right there, but Drilon wouldn't be stampeded into acting. "I've learned a lot from him about the virtue of patience," Legarda told this columnist.

To complicate matters, Sen. Robert Jaworski, who had defected to the coalition over the weekend, told the media that if the legality issue would be put to a vote, he would side with his former colleagues since two of his bills were passed in the June 3-6 session. In addition, Jaworski has had to deal with the black propaganda that his alleged P464-million loan had been restructured by the PNB as a concession for his defection. His cousin-in-law, Edgardo Espiritu, who negotiated his defection, had stressed to this columnist that the senator set absolutely no conditions to the Palace.

Finally at 5 p.m. the opposition trooped in two hours late. Pimentel stood up to assert that while his group recognized Legarda, they believed that their June 3-6 actions were legal. Administration hotheads wanted to open fire, but Drilon wouldn't hear of it. Legarda then stood up to reply that the administration coalition had its own view about the legality issue and that the Senate chief's memos and circulars about it in those days stand on record.

Clearly, the coalition is in a holding pattern, waiting for a more auspicious time and manner to resolve this pesky issue.

* * *

Whether President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo can deliver on the promises she made in her State of the Nation Address is being debated by the citizens, the media and political leaders. But there seems to be some agreement that she is getting better at delivering Sonas. Her voice is several decibels lower and sounds richer. Palace sources said GMA worked on her speech herself, making countless revisions, after Cabinet members had submitted their inputs. Presidential Management Staff Secretary Silvestre Afable was said to have whipped the reports together into a unified form and Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr. came in for stylizing and crafting. GMA apparently believes that practice makes perfect. Last Sunday she was at the Batasan at about 5:30 p.m., with First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and her speech coach Zenaida Amador, to practice at the cavernous session hall. As GMA practiced, she would enter revisions into her laptop. She left the Batasan at 11 p.m.

* * *

The tougher part is how to deliver on her many promises. GMA rightly reserved the strongest condemnation for terrorism and criminality, especially kidnapping, drug-dealing and smuggling, as she lambasted the government agencies that contributed to these problems, including prosecutors and hoods in robes. She noted that when she came into power, only P16 million worth of smuggled goods had been confiscated, but last year this shot up to P1.2 billion, including more than a million bags of smuggled rice. She wants the smugglers charged with economic sabotage, a non-bailable capital offense, and the drug menace classified as a national security problem. GMA cited Interior Secretary Joey Lina's recent crackdown on *jueteng*, which saw the relief of seven top generals for failing to stamp out the illegal game, as a preview of what's to come in the war versus terrorism and criminality.

Her declaration of war puts the burden on new PNP Director General Hermogenes Ebdane as well as on the barangay officials and the military, whom she has involved in various aspects of crime fighting (it's about time barangay officials are harnessed especially versus illegal drugs). But Ebdane's resolve to whip the police into shape will go for naught if the PNP is not given the wherewithal to fight terrorists and criminals. Support means funding, which may be difficult to raise given the present economic conditions.

A visit to Padre Garcia

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

ONE of the blessings of devolution is that it has empowered not just local executives but all other officials as well. One of the "fruits" of the country's decade-long experience with devolution, in fact, has been the blossoming of talents among local officials. Autonomy freed them to use their creativity, initiative and drive for programs they conceived and implemented, while scarce local resources challenged their skills in project packaging, lobbying and fund-raising.

One such local official is Wilma Galela, municipal social welfare and development officer of the town of Padre Garcia in Batangas. Some years ago, tipped off by Vice Mayor Boy Manguera of nearby Lipa City that she could access funds for a women's center from the women's party-list Abanse! Pinay, she sent a project proposal to then Rep. Patricia Sarenas. Because the package of projects that legislators could identify as a priority included women's development centers, Wilma's proposal was reviewed favorably.

I don't remember the Padre Garcia project specifically, but I do remember that when the Abanse! Pinay executive committee reviewed proposals for women's centers, one of our guidelines was firm support from the local government unit. This would be in the form of a memorandum of agreement in which the council would agree to allocate an annual budget to operate the center. "We don't want white elephants that will be idle after the first year," I remember then Abanse! Pinay chair Narzalina Lim stressing at a meeting.

Well, Wilma's proposal must have met all the criteria because before long, Padre Garcia was able to access upon the recommendation of Abanse! Pinay P1.2 million to start construction of its women's center. "And to think I never even met Congresswoman Sarenas personally," Wilma marveled. "All our follow-ups and inquiries were made by phone and fax." The first time anyone from Abanse! Pinay met Wilma was during a Women's Month celebration about two years ago when Pat and her chief of staff Kala Constantino turned over the certificate of fund release to the women of Padre Garcia.

* * *

YESTERDAY, it was my privilege to represent Abanse! Pinay at the blessing and inauguration of Padre Garcia's Family and Community Resource Center and Women's Hall. I was quite impressed with the two-story structure, painted green, with finishings, from gleaming white floor tiles to smart office spaces, that testified to the care with which it was built. (No shortcuts were taken in the construction, obviously.)

The occasion also happened to coincide with the opening of Literacy Week and the swearing in of the newly elected barangay officials. The new PNP headquarters (the old one had to give way to the FCRC) as well as the refurbished town hall were being blessed as well. And Mayor Victor Reyes was celebrating his birthday. In all, a most momentous day for Padre Garcia.

Taking part in the ceremonies were Batangas Gov. Hermilando Mandanas, Rep. Oscar Gozos, Board Member Lianda Balilia, herself a native of Padre Garcia, Mayor Reyes and Vice Mayor Eleator Padua.

Also present was Social Welfare Assistant Secretary Ruth Layug, who was there to present Gawad Paglilingkod sa Sambayanan (Gapas) awards, a national recognition program for outstanding social welfare and development officers and programs. Wilma received an award for being the "Outstanding Social Welfare and Development Officer" for Region 4, while Mayor Reyes received an award for Padre Garcia, which won as "Outstanding Municipality" in Region 4. Governor Mandanas received an award for Batangas as the "Best Province" in Region 4, while Jocelyn Montalvo, the provincial social welfare and development officer, was recognized as "Best PSWDO" for Region 4.

Earlier, Mayor Reyes, who is on his third term, revealed that he would be hosting evaluators of a national search for outstanding local government executives. Already named "Outstanding Mayor" for Region 4, he is included among the "Top Five" and is in the running for "Best Mayor" nationwide.

Indeed, we were in the company of winners!

* * *

WHAT I saw that day in Padre Garcia was an excellent example of cooperation and coordination among various players in local governance. For instance, when the P1.2 million from Abanse! Pinay could cover construction of only the basic building shell, Wilma approached Board Member Balilia who endorsed her proposal for additional funding to the governor. The P800,000 from the province made possible the completion of the facility.

Upon Mayor Garcia's urging, the municipal council then allocated an annual budget of around P3 million for the operations of the center. The FCRC houses a temporary shelter for battered women and children, a livelihood training center for women (with 50 sewing machines at the ready), a product display area, meeting rooms, and even a small kitchen.

Even the way the FCRC was furnished is an example of networking and initiative, with furniture sets and bunk beds donated by councilors and private individuals, while a little needling of the council produced funds to buy tables and chairs for the women's hall. The town hall, meanwhile, was refurbished with funds accessed through Representative Gozos.

"When I started here, Padre Garcia was a sixth-class municipality," recalls Wilma. "I was challenged to do the best I could with our scarce resources." Today, under Reyes' leadership, Padre Garcia is on its way to third-class status, and it seems better times have not dimmed his people's drive and energy to do the best they can with the little they have.

934 days at DECS

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

YOU must be a masochist if, after reading former Education Secretary Brother Andrew Gonzalez's book, "An Unfinished Symphony: 934 Days at DECS," you would still aspire for a Cabinet position. Especially for education secretary.

Believe me, I really enjoyed reading the book. Gonzalez's opus is an eye opener, an in-your-face account of how it was to be at the helm of a government bureaucracy in charge of the education of the nation's young, the so-called future of the motherland.

"An Unfinished Symphony" is an interesting and easy read because it is straightforward and honest, spontaneous, straight from the cuff. It is a first-person, insider's account. Reading it made me feel that it was something Gonzalez was dying to write for anyone who cared to know. (The title page says it was "privately printed for the author.") His way of unburdening, exorcising and expelling the toxicity that might have seeped into his system during his stint in government.

Gonzalez, I should say, writes very well, and in long, bold strokes. He is a great story teller. His paragraphs are, yes, oh so long and gray, like he forgot to pause or exhale, but you don't mind them because the incredible situations he describes jump at you. One can't miss the wry humor, but more evident is the man's seriousness in his job. Gonzalez is a seasoned educator of national and international stature, a La Salle Brother with religious vows.

I laughed a lot. I don't believe this, I would say. Or, how has it come to this? Whyever would anyone want this job? Gonzalez does not mince words, calls a spade a spade, names names. The times he does not, you know who those people are.

His 934-day experience was a descent. A descent into a labyrinthine world packed by schemers, powerbrokers, hangers-on, fixers, namedroppers, liars and double-faced and grandstanding politicians. Name it. But thank goodness, there were many good people too, honest and hardworking educators and government bureaucrats who made Gonzalez's work bearable and worth it. They made him believe there was hope, even if the appointing power, the disgraced President Joseph Estrada (whom Gonzalez did not vote for), seemed to have forgotten him.

The book's title does not suggest a great, melodic trip like one would with Schubert's "Unfinished" but, Gonzalez says, he liked the title because his experiences moved in a symphonic-like structure. He uses symphony movements as metaphors and chapter titles.

I go over the first pages of Gonzalez's book while humming the familiar first measures of Schubert's symphony in my mind and I say, hmmm, I bet something's going to give. Schubert's simple beginning suddenly hurtles forward to a crescendo.

Gonzalez's account of his first months in office, I find hilarious, even if I am sure Gonzalez did not mean it to be that way. He finds out that "DECS is full of leaks and rumors." The situations he describes during his provincial visits and encounters with local bureaucratic subculture are both surreal and so real, they sound like a Peta play. Then the confirmation process which he thought would be a breeze turns out to be a road to Calvary. The imagined ghosts of Christmases past come alive.

But the bigger hurdles are down the road, waiting. Corruption in the bureaucracy, lack of funds, meddling of politicians, congressional hearings, bidding scams, textbook and uniform anomalies, charges of unethical practices and corruption against him (remember the Land Bank donation and the Ford Expedition?), being bypassed, the lack of support from the President. Gonzalez could have thrown in the towel earlier, but he stayed on.

"Life in government," writes Gonzalez, "is full of surprises, from the most unexpected corners. There are plots and counterplots with actors behind the scenes manipulating us like puppets without our really knowing who or what is behind the harassment. It is a form of shadow boxing that I have very little knack for and for which I am surely at a disadvantage."

Gonzalez writes about presidential "sister" Celia Ejercito de Castro's visit and his mentioning the name in a Senate hearing, "my first major faux pas as a member of the Cabinet." He talks about the PPSTA and the uniform scam. "A notorious supplier of DECS, one connected with the office of a former senator who had been well-known for 'ghost' deliveries of chairs and who had many lawsuits pending against her for estafa...made an earlier move by offering her services to PPSTA as broker for the clothing..."

Toward the end, he reflects on "his vowed life in pursuit of service to the Lord and to a fundamental rightness in life." He writes about the series of events before the fall of the Estrada administration and the pressure for him to resign. "My own religious superiors were after me, although in fairness to the Provincial, Brother Armin Luistro, FSC, he never commanded me to resign. Statement after statement from some of the Brothers...as well as repeated signed declarations in the press condemned the Estrada administration and, by implication, questioned my position." Gonzalez explains why he stayed until...

In "Coda," the last chapter, Gonzalez pays tribute to public school teachers and administrators who uphold integrity and professionalism. He summarizes what he has learned, the problems of the education system and what needs to be done. He wanted to effect lasting changes that would be institutionalized, he says.

Despite his unwholesome revelations, Gonzalez rues the fact that 934 days were all he had.

* * *

Send comments to cerespd@info.com.ph

Dade hates me

YOUNG BLOOD

Richard L.

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

ONE thing that really bothers me is knowing that somebody hates me. And the feeling gets worse when that somebody happens to be the father of my fiancée. It might sound like one of those soaps, but it is really happening to me.

I don't know what Dade hates about me. Even before her daughter and I became a couple, I already knew that I would have a hard time convincing him that I deserved his baby's love. Up to now, the way he looks at me (actually he doesn't look at me when we talk) makes me feel unwelcome.

You see, I'm not the kind of man a daddy would want his only daughter to marry. I'm not rich, good-looking and tall, and I don't have a title like "Doctor " or "Attorney." My bank account has an outstanding balance of P1,496.40 as I write this. I only look good after taking a bath—but only with shaving cream on my face. The only time I feel like I am standing tall is when I make a shot over bigger opponents in basketball. A title I will have only after I die and it will read "R.I.P."

Is it my fault that despite my handicaps I still managed to win the heart of a looker? Maybe I am just lucky or, should I say, blessed.

For a year and a half, I was very fortunate to have a best friend like Janice. She opened the door to an amazing world I had never imagined I would get into. I was a loner, a loser and a former rebel. All my grievances and doubts were erased by a single smile from my beloved Janice.

Do I sound like I'm in love with my best friend? Well, I was indeed in love with her. And to make the story short, I confessed to her and she "accepted" me and we became us.

After six months, everything seems to have fallen into place. I love her and she feels the same way about me. We believe we are each other's destiny.

Unfortunately, her dad doesn't believe in such "crap." I really don't know why Dade doesn't like me. Is it because he thinks her daughter deserves a man who looks good enough to continue their fine genes? Or is he afraid I would spoil their family portrait?

Heaven knows, I have tried everything to impress my future father-in-law. I even joined a popular TV game show and miraculously reached the monthly finals. I thought this would show to him the other side of me: that even though I don't have much face value, my brain is worth almost P200,000 in cash and prizes.

Joining the game helped in a way. I became the topic of conversation at their dinner table and Dade seemed to realize that there was more than meets the eye in me. For two months, I was allowed to visit. I even spent New Year's Eve with their family.

I didn't know I was still under close examination. I felt at ease and confident that everything was okay.

I was wrong. One single mistake cost me dearly. Now I am again banned from their premises.

Good thing I still have the trust and love of Janice. And that is reason enough for me to be thankful to God.

Ja and I will continue to fight our "battle." We think it is part of God's plan to prepare us for greater challenges ahead.

The real reason Dade cannot accept me remains a mystery. I may never know why, but the bottom line is he hates me.

I love her. She loves me. He hates me. The textbooks refer to this as ecological balance. But in my book, it's something I have to learn to live with until the day I can prove to Dade that I am worthy of his daughter's love. But even if he continues to hate me, I will still thank him for having an amazing daughter like Janice. For that, I love you, Dade!

Richard L., 25, works as a publicity officer for a video rental shop in Quezon City.

A date to remember

Willard Cheng

I WAS beaming as I sat at the table during an otherwise dull wedding banquet. As I was about to partake of the steamed lobster and stir fried noodles, I found myself reading a text message from a girl whom I had invited for a movie date. I had suggested we watch "A Walk to Remember." Although she hinted in the text message that she was going to Ilocos for vacation, she said she "would really love to watch the movie." But since the movie's play date had not yet been announced, I was at a loss as to when to set the movie date.

I suggested that she text me as soon as she got back from Ilocos so we could watch the movie together if it was still showing by then. I was thrilled when she texted back: "Let's see ok? Thanks so much, Willard. I really appreciate your invitation. I was quite surprised but happy. I miss you, Wi, I really do. Good night "

That was enough to set me planning and visualizing scenarios for our movie date. Of course, I would bring her to the best and most comfortable movie house I know. I would treat her to a modest lunch and cap the day with coffee.

This was a girl to whom I had professed my love when we were in Grade 4. But we had rarely seen each other since she went to La Salle for college even if we belonged to the same *barkada*. I thought that our date would be the best opportunity to renew our friendship and jump-start my courtship.

Yes, since Grade 4, I had yet to score some *"pogi points"* with her. Flowers and gifts were the staple but there were no intimate dates. Obviously telling her when we were in high school that I really liked her was not enough. It was time, I thought, to let her really feel that she was special. It was time to loosen my concentration on my studies and newspaper work and invest time with a girl I wanted to grow old with. As one of my buddies put it, *"Huwag mo nang pakawalan, torpe!"*

In the meantime, I decided to look for a copy of Nicholas Sparks' book. Since I usually go for David Morrell crime thrillers and Dean Koontz fright fests, "A Walk to Remember" was actually my first "cheesy" read. Nevertheless, I thought the book would make a good date movie, if we shared the same idea of a date movie being a sappy, funny and feel-good one.

Later when classes opened in La Salle, I was invited to a birthday party of a high school friend. The party was scheduled on June 5, the same day "A Walk to Remember" was starting its run. Since the birthday celebrator was a common friend, I expected to see the girl in the restaurant.

She was the first person I saw in the middle of a noisy bunch of high school friends. I waved my hand and said hello. Immediately I thought of bringing up my invitation and asking her again. But I had to greet the birthday girl and exchange pleasantries with old buddies and former classmates. Besides, how would I ask the girl who was seated with another group of friends? I would get to her later, I thought.

Instead, I sat beside my best friend of 15 years and we chatted away like parrots. Then in the middle of the meal consisting of roast chicken and mashed potato, her best friend broke the news: "She now has a boyfriend!" I was stunned, and all I could say was, "Really?"

Another *barkada* confirmed the news. "They've been together since February," he said.

As I left the party, I just waved a goodbye to the girl. On that first day "A Walk to Remember" was showing, I drove to Power Plant and watched the movie. Alone.

Willard Cheng, 19, is an AB Communication junior at the Ateneo de Manila University where he is also an editor of The Guidon.

'Corruption as American as apple pie'

THAT was pretty undiplomatic talk that we got from American Ambassador Frank Ricciardone. (PDI, 7/16/02) I guess we deserve that with our officials' pandering to the Americans in public from President Bush down to the lowest American army private and Seabee who is doing what we ourselves should be doing in the jungles of Basilan. Almost 20 percent of Filipinos want to escape to the good old US of A because they feel they and their families can no longer survive in our own man-made social and economic jungle. In our poverty, we have lost our self-respect.

But Ricciardone has no right to talk like that to us, especially accusing us of corruption, when American corruption is all over the front pages of newspapers. Enron, Arthur Andersen, Worldcom and many other corporations touted as icons of American capitalism have all shown how rotten it is at the core. American corruption is bringing the world economy down, except for China which, having isolated itself from the US contagion, is enjoying an 8 percent GDP growth. And if you think American officials are not on the take, just remember that both President Bush and Vice President Cheney have dipped their fingers in the American pie of corporate corruption, as reported by the media.

Don't believe Ricciardone's implication that America became rich because of honest hard sweat. The early American settlers from Europe grabbed what is now the United States from the native American Indians through war and genocide, and what they were unable to get by force of arms they got through swindling. Remember the "purchase" of Manhattan with some worthless beads?

Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad had remarked tongue-in-cheek during an international meeting in Manila that he himself would have wanted to keep slaves, except that it was prohibited by the law. If we had leaders like Mahathir who are not fooled by Americans, we would not be today in this situation where we can be insulted publicly by an American envoy.

When they could no longer keep their slaves, the Americans joined the scramble for colonies at the turn of the 20th century, conquering the Philippines to serve as their foothold in the exploitation of China's "illimitable markets." And if you think the Americans ruled us honestly, think twice. Remember the Cabinet crisis of 1922 when Interior Secretary Jose P. Laurel resigned because of a corruption scandal under the administration of American Governor General Leonard Wood? An American chief of detectives in the police department of Manila, Rey Conley, was accused of taking bribes from operators of illegal gambling but he was absolved by Wood even before an investigating committee could complete its probe. This led to the resignation of Laurel and the entire Cabinet.

An American member of the Philippine Commission, which had both executive and legislative powers during the American occupation, bought a large tract of friar lands in a conflict of interest with his public position.

As an American author had written, "Corruption is as American as apple pie."

Ricciardone should be booted out of our country by our government for his arrogant and undiplomatic statements. He should be fired by his government for breaching the norms of diplomacy by acting as proconsul in a country that is supposed to be independent. Truth is an offense in diplomacy.

—MANUEL F. ALMARIO, Project 6, Quezon City

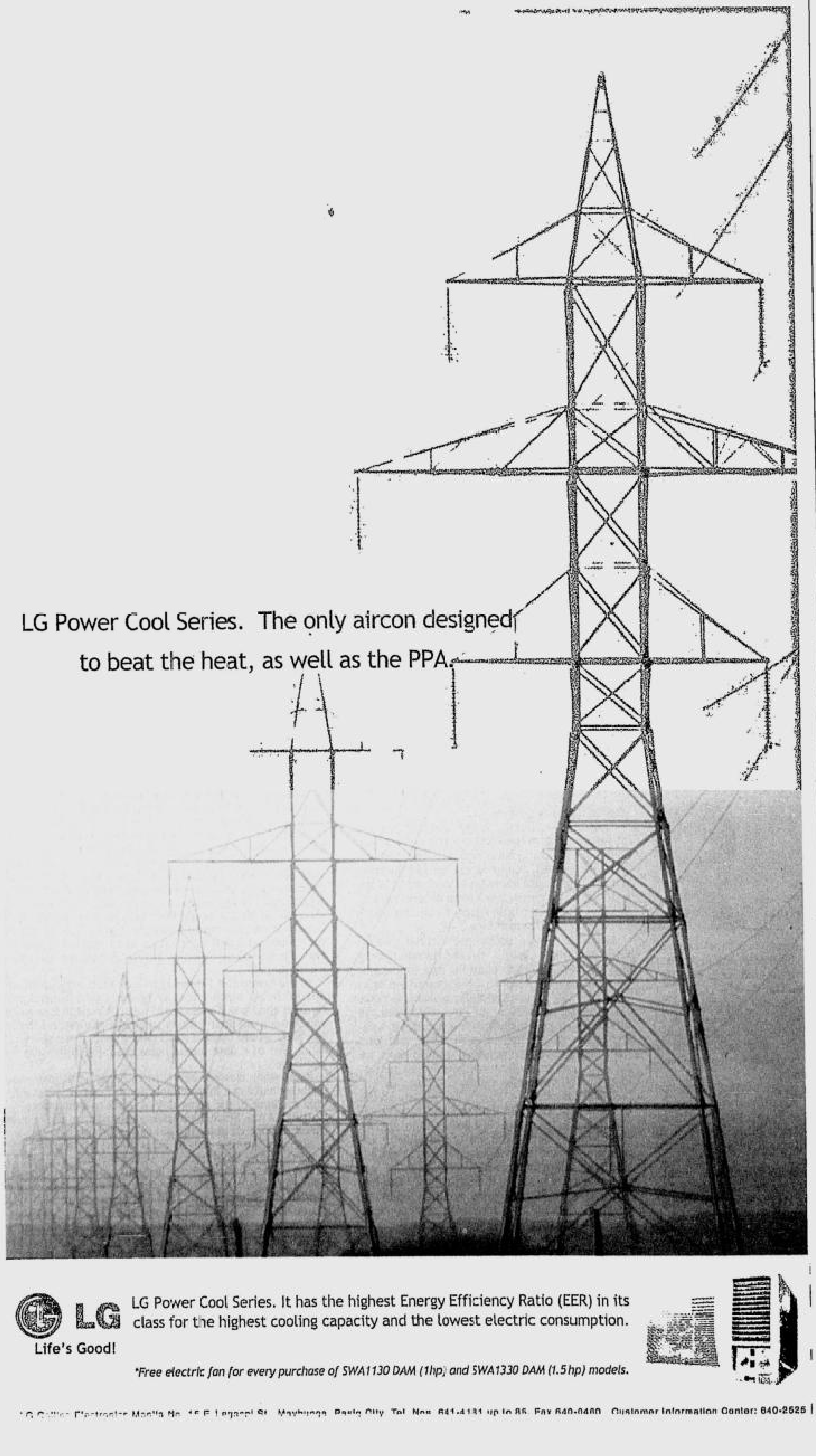
Ricciardone only spoke the truth

I PROBABLY write on behalf of many overseas Filipinos when I say that US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone should be congratulated for telling the truth about corruption in the Philippines.

Many of us are forced to work and live abroad because of corruption. Many foreign investors are not investing because of corruption. So, more Filipinos are going abroad.

To solve corruption, President Macapagal-Arroyo should only appoint incorruptible and competent people like former Executive Secretary Renato de Villa as foreign secretary so that overseas Filipinos will be taken good care of by the Department of Foreign Affairs.

—OSCAR R. LANDICHO,
orlandicho@hotmail.com.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A strong republic?

JULY is a month of fiestas, political ones that is. But the festive atmosphere around the two events—barangay elections on July 15 and the President's State of the Nation Address (Sona) on July 22—can be deceptive. I was actually quite depressed with both events, which to me seemed to highlight what's most grievously wrong with Philippine democracy.

The barangay elections, with its low voter turnout, tell us that we lack the community foundations for a democracy. We boast about having high voter turnouts in national elections, much higher than most Western countries, and we think that reflects a vibrant democracy.

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

In reality, in Western societies people tend to give more attention to local politics, which I think is the true test of democracy. The communities are powerful, able to refuse permission for a new establishment which they think might harm their environment, or challenging national policies that seem detrimental to their community.

In the Philippines, there is little interest in barangay politics because we are caught in a feudal patronage system. Survival is equated with connections to politicians at the higher levels, preferably the national. Democracy, in terms of decisions on vital issues, does not function at the barangay level because it is not to the advantage of national politicians to get communities empowered. Barangay officials are there only to deliver votes when national elections come around, the votes assured by a few token doles.

There is a vicious cycle created here. The communities are weak and therefore are unable to lobby effectively for services they need. Because communities are not empowered, the sense of community identity remains stunted. Politicians know this, and prefer to keep the communities weak because this perpetuates the dependency relationships.

Given this situation, the President's latest Sona is alarming because she seems to be shifting the focus of her administration away from basic services toward some grand plan to build a "strong republic," one which I feel will only reinforce our feudal politics.

Rightly so, the President sees a link between a strong republic and the delivery of essential services, but there is a major flaw in the way she envisions this link. For the President, a strong republic produces "good policies and empowered institutions." I worry about the term "empowered institutions" because institutions are already powerful and often quite oppressive. They do not need to be further empowered.

What happens in feudal societies like our own is that the delivery of essential services, rather than being an end in itself, becomes a tool for politicians to "empower" their own institutions, their election machinery. When the President rattles off her government's accomplishments, she's empowering her institutions, telling us that we owe her for every hectare of land distributed in land reform, for every certificate of security of tenure issued, for every kilo of P60 *galunggong* found.

As an economist, the President should know that if she puts in the fundamentals in terms of sound economic policies—and she seems to be making strides here—she would leave a far more lasting and valuable legacy than any other Filipino president. But no, she now shifts to this rhetoric of a strong republic, of acting tough, of smashing syndicates. No doubt, criminality is a problem but surely the President must know that a real war on the criminals will mean a war on her own government, her own police and army generals.

Unfortunately, tough talk is political capital, too. Expect more of our political system to degenerate into a spectator sport. Expect more press conferences with the President displaying terrorists, kidnappers, smugglers, drug dealers.

To the credit of the President, her Sona last year set a precedent in naming specific targets as benchmarks for evaluating her presidency. But she is in a quagmire, caught by a system where even the evaluation turns into a spectator sport.

We have to hold all our politicians, and not just the President, accountable for successes and failures. We have to be asking our lawmakers why they spend so much time with media events rather than acting on bills such as one that will allow overseas Filipino workers to vote, or another one that will provide for a system of gross income taxation, or still another one, a law that will allow farmland to be used as collateral for loans.

We have been asking what it is about government procedures that meant the President approving, only last week and suspiciously close to the Sona, the "missing link" for the existing mass railway transit (MRT) system to connect North Avenue to Monumento. Don't even think of an expanded MRT to go into Cavite, we are now told the Aurora Boulevard/Sta. Mesa line should be running by 2004.

Then there's waste management, an area that has seen little movement in the last year despite its urgency. Waste segregation is prescribed by law but the authorities have been reluctant to implement the law because of widespread opposition. Yet several subdivisions have on their own started their own systems of segregation. When there's a sense of community, and people are allowed to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of a policy, they will make their choices. But that sense of community will never be allowed to develop. It's too dangerous in a feudal political system.

The drone of statistics continues. We hear of 1,005 barangay schools "almost completed" but not about the original target of 10,000 barangay schools, which was then reduced to 1,600. We hear of 1,500 Ate Glo rolling stores set up, 50 percent over the original target. Is this the strong republic we envision, an edifice with each stone marked by a sign claiming it was donated by some politician?

* * *

Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.net

Blame it on defective electric meter

THIS has reference to an item which appeared on the front page of your paper recently, titled "Now, Ka Bel gripes about low electric bill."

To clarify the concerns raised by Party-List Rep. Crispin Beltran, please allow us to explain.

Firstly, there is no sneaky ploy being used here, as alleged by Beltran. The only reason for the unusually low bill is nothing more than an apparent technical problem in his electric meter. In fact this was explained to him by our Commonwealth branch head, Melinda Derpo, during their meeting at our branch office.

The meter in question will undergo the usual laboratory test duly witnessed by Beltran's representative to determine the defect. In the meantime, the meter has been replaced and as soon as we are able to determine the reason behind the erroneous meter reading, our Commonwealth branch will send him the official results.

We hope that we have explained our position on the matter. Rest assured that Meralco remains committed to providing utmost service to Beltran and all our customers.

—RITZI V. RONQUILLO, manager,
Corporate Communication,
Manila Electric Co., Ortigas
Avenue, Pasig City

The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Israeli attack draws int'l flak

GAZA—The militant Islamic group Hamas has vowed to avenge Israel's killing of the commander of its military wing and 14 other Palestinians, including nine children, in a missile strike in the heart of Gaza City.

At least 145 Palestinians were also wounded when an Israeli fighter slammed a warhead into the home of militant leader Salah Shehada in a crowded neighborhood early on Tuesday. The dead included a two-month-old baby.

The attack drew rare criticism from Washington which joined the European Union, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and a slew of countries around the world in condemning the strike.

Israel said the attack was an unavoidable step to protect its people from suicide bombers. Israeli officials said the army had incorrect intelligence information showing that Shehada was alone in the apartment at the time.

They said Shehada was behind a wave of suicide bombings that had killed dozens of Israelis over the past two years and was planning a series of large-scale suicide attacks to take place in the next 72 hours.

Gaza City rang out with bursts of automatic machine gun fire at a funeral attended by about 300,000 people, at which a man held aloft the tiny body of a baby wrapped in a flag as masked men chanted: "Death to Israel! Death to America!"

Residents said there had been no warning, not even the sound of a plane before the missile attack, which left the neighborhood a picture of devastation.

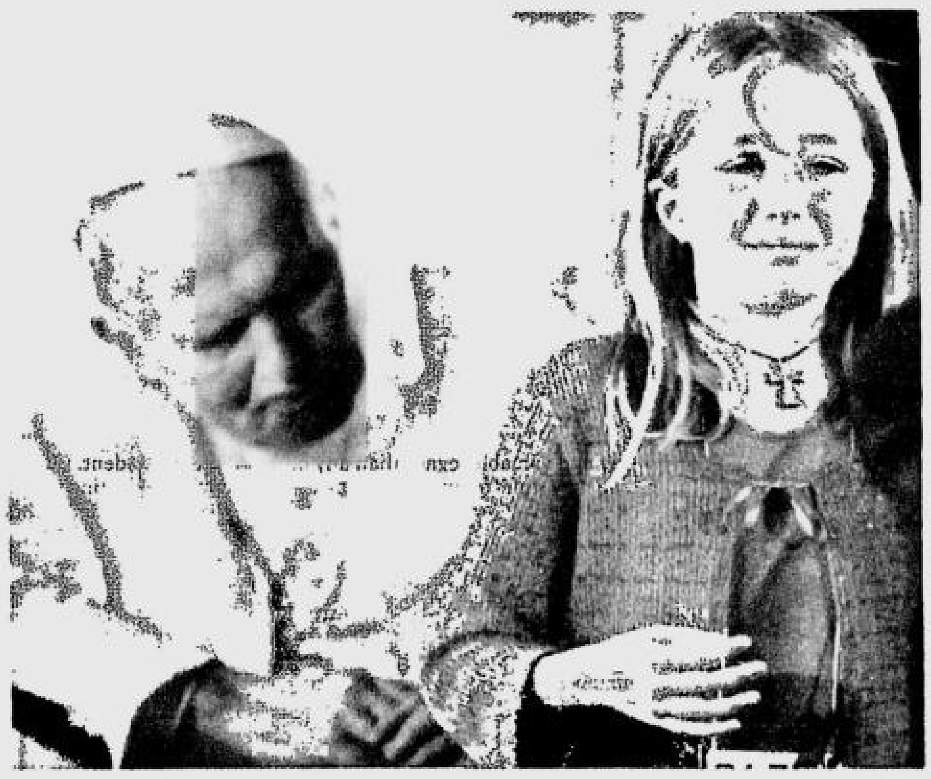
Dazed residents stumbled through dust and debris, looking for loved ones who might still be trapped in the wreckage.

Israel described the attack as one of its most significant blows against Palestinian militants waging an uprising for an independent state in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, while expressing regret for the loss of civilian life.

But Hamas's vows of revenge raised the possibility of another upsurge of violence—after a month of relative calm—endangering a fragile new dialogue between Israel and Palestinian moderates.

Shehada, head of the Izz el-Deen al-Qassam brigades, was killed a day after Hamas's spiritual leader, wheelchair-bound Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, said it would consider halting suicide attacks if Israel withdrew from occupied West Bank cities

Reuters



GEORGIA Giddings from Baysville, Ontario, cries after meeting Pope John Paul II (left) following his arrival in Toronto, July 23. The Pope is in Canada to participate in World Youth Day. REUTERS

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Singing, cheering Catholic youth greet Pontiff

TORONTO—Singing hymns and exchanging greetings in dozens of languages, Catholic youths from around the globe came to Canada for religious unity and to meet like-minded people from other cultures.

Most of all, though, they came to see and hear Pope John Paul II.

The frail, 82-year-old pontiff arrived Tuesday to take part in World Youth Day festivities, thrilling the tens of thousands of young pilgrims by slowly descending the steps from his Alitalia jet despite crippling hip and knee problems.

"We believe this could be the last World Youth Day with this pope," said Ariane Vieiraleite, 23, one of 3,000 pilgrims from Brazil. "He will be a messenger, a prophet for God."

The pope was to spend Wednesday resting. His first public event will be a welcoming ceremony on Thursday.

Crowds of young people thronged Exhibition Place on the shore of Lake Ontario to watch on giant monitors as the pope's plane landed at Toronto's Pearson International Airport miles away. They formed a sea of color, with flags from many of the 170 countries represented waving in the hot afternoon sunshine.

The pilgrims cheered when John Paul appeared at the door of the plane, then shouted encouragement and praise for his determined walk down the stairs, helped by an aide clutching his left arm.

Some aides have expressed concern that the 11-day trip, which will continue to Guatemala and Mexico, may be too challenging for a man suffering from the symptoms of Parkinson's disease and the hip and knee ailments. But for the faithful, what matters is that John Paul is here.

"It's not just physical presence, it's his spiritual presence," said Jeffrey Roman, 18, from St. Peter's Youth Ministry in Olney, Maryland.

Prime Minister Jean Chretien joined other Canadian government and religious leaders in greeting the pope.

AP

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Mel Tiangco with some beneficiaries of Bisig Bayan.

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US: Omar still in Afghanistan; many got out

WASHINGTON—Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar is still believed hiding from US-led forces inside Afghanistan, but most of the al-Qaida leaders he once harbored have left, US government officials said.

Most of the important captures of al-Qaida figures announced in recent weeks have been on the Pakistan side of the border or elsewhere in the world.

Omar and al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden, the top two on America's most wanted terrorist list, remain elusive.

American troops hoped early this month that they were on the trail of one-eyed Taliban spiritual leader Omar, who like most others from the routed fundamentalists regime have remained in their home country, defense officials said Tuesday.

But the search in Omar's home province of Uruzgan went horribly wrong.

US troops believed they were drawing anti-aircraft fire, responded with air strikes by an AC-130 gunship and accidentally killed an estimated 40 Afghan civilians. Omar is believed to remain in the mountainous region in or near the province.

Al-Qaida leader Bin Laden's whereabouts also remain a mystery.

His lieutenants—mostly Arabs, have all but abandoned the home they had under Taliban, an administration official said on condition of anonymity. One group of al-Qaida leaders is thought to have fled to Pakistan, while other members scattered to other countries.

In recent months, US officials acknowledged the capture of two high-ranking al-Qaida figures: operations chief Abu Zubaydah in March in Pakistan, and operational planner Abu Zubair al-Haili in June in Morocco.

Though the Pentagon has been secretive about identifying those captured, here is a list of some others captured, killed or still sought in the first campaign of the counterterror war:

- Among al-Qaida, America and its allies say they've captured or killed 12 top leaders since Sept. 11.
- They have identified about 20 more al-Qaida they are seeking, including bin Laden top deputy Ayman al-Zawahri, financial chief Shaikh Saiid al-Sharif and operational planner Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, believed involved in the Sept. 11 attacks and the April 11 bombing of a Tunisian synagogue.
- Suspected al-Qaida fugitives captured in Pakistan in the past two weeks may include a senior official, Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld said Monday. *AP*

China missile designed to evade defenses

WASHINGTON—China recently test-fired a missile that may be designed to evade missile defenses, a Pentagon official said Tuesday.

The missile, a CSS-5, launched several objects during the test that are thought to be decoys, the official said, speaking on the condition of anonymity.

Those decoys could be used to confuse the sensors of interceptor missiles launched to shoot down the Chinese missile, the official said. Interceptors would chase the decoys, allowing the real warhead to escape harm and reach its target.

The test, first reported by the Washington Times on Tuesday, took place earlier this month.

It is also possible the test represents Chinese experimentation with multiple functional warheads that could be deployed from one missile, or some other kind of enhancement, the official said.

The official characterized the experiment as an expected development in China's missile program, taking place as its potential adversaries, including the United States and Taiwan, invest in missile defenses. China may need to overcome those defenses if it wants to maintain its nuclear deterrent, or its ability to strike back if it is attacked with nuclear weapons, the official said.

The United States is developing a range of missile defenses, from a new generation of the Patriot missile up to long-range defenses capable of protecting most of North America from an attack by a few long-range missiles.

The Pentagon claims its new missile defenses will be able to distinguish decoys from incoming warheads, but critics charge the decoys can't be overcome. *AP*

US, Europe seal 'historic' missile defense partnership

THE FIRST British production Eurofighter Typoon IPA1 performs at Farnborough International Airshow, July 23. The UK fighter made it's first public appearance and marked the official adoption of the Typhoon name for the Royal Air Force. REUTERS

FARNBOROUGH, England—European Aeronautic Defense and Space Company (EADS) and US aerospace giant Boeing unveiled Tuesday an "historic" transatlantic partnership in ballistic missile defense that could pave the way for joint US-European development programs.

"The transatlantic team effort will focus on creating end-to-end products for global missile defense," Boeing and EADS said in a joint statement at the Farnborough Air Show, outside London.

"This agreement establishes a framework for our relationship in the area of global missile defense that would ultimately protect the US and its allies from global threats," they added.

Boeing said it had also signed similar agreements with Britain's BAE Systems and Alenia-Spacio, a unit of Italy's Finmeccanica.

The partnership is the first on ballistic missile defense between Boeing, the prime US government contractor in integrated missile defense systems, and European companies. EADS is the largest European aerospace company and the number two worldwide.

The partnership is also seen as the first step towards joint US-European missile defense programs, if European governments give it their seal of approval.

US President George W. Bush has committed the United States to deploying a missile shield as soon as possible, rejecting complaints from European allies, who argue that the plan will spark a new arms race.

The Bush administration insists a missile defense is needed to counter threats from "rogue states" such as Iran, Iraq and North Korea, and has offered to cooperate with Europe and Russia in creating a shield that would protect them as well. *AFP*

2 banking giants gave Enron $8B in 'sham' loans, says prober

WASHINGTON—US banks' links to the Enron debacle came into the spotlight Tuesday as a Senate probe highlighted the role of two banking giants in helping Enron obtain billions in loans that were disguised as trading revenues.

The news rocked the share prices of the banks in question: Citigroup, whose shares fell 15.7 percent, and JP Morgan Chase, down 18 percent.

Robert Roach, chief investigator for the Senate permanent subcommittee on investigations, told a hearing into Enron finances that the probe showed these two banks provided at least eight billion dollars in "sham" loans to Enron and had similar deals with other firms.

The banks "accepted and followed Enron's desire to keep the nature of these transactions confidential," Roach said, while Enron booked the revenues as loans so it could claim the interest as a business expense.

"If Enron had properly accounted for these transactions, its total debt would have increased by about 40 percent to about 14 billion dollars, and its funds flow from operations would have dropped by almost 50 percent to about 1.7 billion," he said.

Subcommittee chairman Senator Carl Levin called the Enron transactions "an accounting sham" that hid loans from the company's balance sheer and claimed that Enron did this with "the help and knowing assistance of the biggest financial institutions in our country, including JP Morgan Chase and Citigroup." "Enron is not the only company obtaining loans disguised as commodity trades, and recording cash flows from operations instead of from financing," Roach told the panel.

"Major financial institutions are knowingly assisting and even promoting such transactions, which would not be possible without their willingness to provide the funds, the paperwork, and a sham offshore trading partner." Roach said that Citigroup "shopped" this type of deal to 14 companies, successfully selling it to at least three.

JP Morgan Chase "apparently entered into Enron-style prepays with seven companies apart from Enron," Roach added. *AFP*

noticias
INGRID BETANCOURT
DIRIGENTE SECUESTRADA

THIS July 23 frame grab from a Noticias Uno broadcast shows kidnapped presidential candidate Ingrid Betancourt (right) and her runningmate Clara Rojas. The video was released by the kidnappers, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the country's most powerful leftist rebel group. AFP

Video shows kidnapped Colombia candidate alive

BOGOTA, Colombia—A one-time Colombian presidential candidate and her running mate were alive as recently as May 15 after being kidnapped five months ago, according to video footage.

Leftist rebels seized Ingrid Betancourt and Clara Rojas on Feb. 23, when the two ventured into a rebel safe haven just days after President Andres Pastrana ended peace talks and ordered government troops to retake the area.

Betancourt said in the video released Tuesday that she had been held for 82 days, indicating that the footage was shot on May 15. She said she still supported peace talks with her captors, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC.

"I believe in the (peace) negotiations," she said, reading from notes. "I continue to defend them now."

The normally animated Betancourt was noticeably subdued in the video, which aired on Canal Uno. She was dressed in what looked like a military jacket.

It was not immediately clear how Canal Uno obtained the video.

Betancourt polled less than 2 percent in the May 26 election. Alvaro Uribe won the election and will assume power on Aug. 7.

Rojas was Betancourt's campaign manager at the time of the kidnapping but was named her running mate before the election.

The FARC has said that it wants to trade Betancourt and dozens of other political hostages for rebels being held in Colombian jails. The Colombian government has refused.

Shortly after the kidnapping, the group said it would hold Betancourt for a year and would not be responsible for her fate after that. The rebels have not said anything about her status since then. *AP*

Ex-generals ordered to pay torture victims

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador—A US jury's decision Tuesday to hold two former generals responsible for civil war atrocities in El Salvador is a positive step toward honoring the war's many victims, human rights groups here said.

"It is an incentive for the efforts that we are making to honor the victims' memories," said Armando Perez, coordinator of the private Committee for the Victims of Human Rights Violations.

"International law is opening new doors so that cases of impunity can be addressed," Perez added, noting that the Salvadoran government itself has still not acknowledged its own responsibility "for the damage it did to so many Salvadoran families."

A spokesperson for the Salvadoran Defense Department said there would be no immediate comment on the verdict.

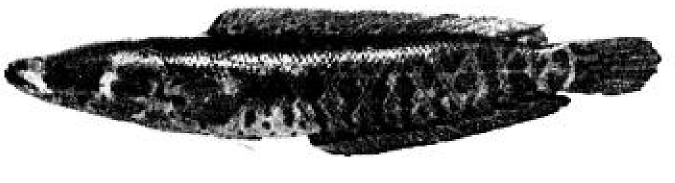
A US jury in Florida on Tuesday ordered retired Gens. Carlos Eugenio Vides Casanova and Jose Guillermo Garcia to pay $54.6 million to three torture victims.

The jury found that the generals had ignored massacres and other atrocities against civilians during the 12-year civil war.

The verdict "gives us great satisfaction because even though it is only these two people, they morally represent everything that happened in this country," said Marta Araujo, coordinator of the Association of Rural Communities for the Development of El Salvador.

The nongovernmental organization led protests against alleged human rights violations both during and after the war. *AP*

Land-walking fish invades 7 US states



DESCRIBING the land-walking snakehead fish as "something from a bad horror movie," Interior Secretary Gale Norton said on July 23 that she wants to ban US imports of the Asian predator that has turned up in seven states from Maine to Hawaii. REUTERS

WASHINGTON—Describing the land-walking snakehead fish as "something from a bad horror movie," Interior Secretary Gale Norton said on Tuesday she wants to ban US imports of the Asian predator that has turned up in seven states from Maine to Hawaii.

The freshwater snakehead has a voracious appetite, often consuming all other fish in a lake or pond and even eating its young. It can slither across land, staying out of water for up to three days, to find new sources of food.

"These fish are like something from a bad horror movie," Norton told reporters as she announced a department proposal to prohibit the import or sale across state lines of 28 species of the snakehead.

Norton warned that snakeheads can eat almost any small animal in its path and reproduce quickly.

"They have the potential to cause enormous damage to our valuable recreational and commercial fisheries. We must do everything we can to prevent them from entering our waters, either accidentally or intentionally," she said.

They have even attacked people in China who got too close to snakeheads' egg nesting areas, Norton said. They are also native to Africa.

The fish's natural habitat is in freshwater lakes, ponds and rivers in Asia and Africa.

Thankfully, they have natural predators: smaller snakeheads are eaten by bigger fish, while the full-grown, 3-foot (one metre) snakehead is consumed by crocodiles and alligators.

Snakeheads have been found in seven states: Hawaii, Florida, California, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts and Rhode Island, according to the Interior Department. Thirteen states prohibit possession of live snakeheads.

The fish gained notoriety this summer after several snakeheads were found in a Maryland pond. The so-called Frankenfish were dumped there by a local resident who had bought them to make soup for a sick relative.

Maryland officials are considering poisoning the small lake where at least 80 baby snakeheads have been found.

The fish has primarily been imported to the United States by seafood sellers and aquarium shops.

Snakeheads are sold in live food fish markets and some restaurants in Boston and New York, where they are legal. The fish have also been sold through some aquarium fish retailers over the Internet.

All such sales would end under the department proposal. The US Fish and Wildlife Service and US Customs inspectors would be able to seize shipments of live snakeheads and their eggs.

Those caught transporting snakeheads could face up to six months in prison and fines as high as $5,000 for individuals and $10,000 for organizations. *Reuters*

Labrador paddles 16km to shore

LONDON—A young black labrador paddled for 10 miles dodging ferries, oil tankers and yachts to reach land after falling overboard from his master's boat off the southern English coast.

Two-year-old Todd's six-hour, 16-km marathon surprised canine experts and delighted his owner, newspapers said on Wednesday.

"To swim that far is incredible, especially in the sea. I'm seriously impressed," Freda Scott-Park of the British Small Animal Vetinerary Association told The Times.

Owner Peter Loizou, who spent four hours searching for Todd after discovering his canine crewmember had jumped ship in the Solent, said it was a miracle he had survived.

"He swam across the waves, across the currents to get home," he said. "I am so pleased to see him, he is like a child to me." Pet and master were finally reunited after Todd clambered ashore after swimming up the River Beaulieu in Hampshire and police scanned a microchip in the dog's ear. *Reuters*

MESSAGES

MALACANANG PALACE
Manila

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As one of the most dynamic insurance companies in Pampanga, you help hasten rural development throught your pioneering efforts in countryside investment. By providing much-needed capital through microfinancing, you also support entrepreneurship and help create job opportunities that are the backbones in forging a strong republic.

May you continue to be our ally in our fundamental war against poverty, particularly in Pampanga and in Central Luzon. I urge you to join me in promoting the welfare of the Filipino, especially the poor and the disadvantaged.

Mabuhay tayong lahat!

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Finance
INSURANCE COMMISSION
1071 United Nations Avenue
Manila

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The CGIC is one of the several insurance companies that opted to have their head office strategically located outside the metropolis, but nonetheless in the hub of industrial, business, and economic activities. With this, the company brought its services closer to the numerous establishments, organizations, property owners, and individual consumers in the region.

In our risk-managed environment, insurance is the key factor to growth and development. It is my hope, therefore, that the company shall continue to focus its efforts and initiatives in raising standards in the insurance business to ensure that our policyholders get only the best out of the best out of the premiums they pay, and in this way convince more and more of our people of the benefits that insurance can offer.

EDUARDO T. MALINIS
Insurance Commissioner

Third District, Pampanga

Warmest greetings to the Corporate Guarantee and Insurance Co., Inc. as it celebrates its fifth anniversary as one of the fast-growing non-life insurance firms in the country today.

With its firm commitment to business growth and development, especially in the countryside, Corporate Guarantee has set the example for corporate vision and direction that benefit not only its clients but the large community as well.

Pampanga and Central Luzon are fortunate to have a company of such character and culture that promote business excellece where it greatly matters and corporate commitment where its values are highly essential.

As long as stays on this course and focus, Corporate Guarantee and Insurance Co., Inc. can look forward to more anniversaries and greater things ahead.

More power and congratulations to the officers and employees.

Oscar S. Rodriguez
Congressman
Third District, Pampanga

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF PAMPANGA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
City of San Fernando, Pampanga

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Corporate guarantee is no less a source of pride for all kapampangans. Apart from being fully owned by kapampangan enrepreneurs, It also carries with it the stamp of excellence and culture of competitives that is basically at the heart of every kapampangan in every aspect of private and public undertaking

I know that corporate guarantee has more challenging and rewarding years ahead to mark its future anniversaries, and Pampanga will be always be benefitted by these distinct milestones.

Mabuhay and Congratulations!

LITO M. LAPID
Governor

Republic of the Philippines
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It is a welcome relief that companies such as CGIC has continued to prosper in the province even in this times of calamities. I urge the management and staff of CGIC to continue your commendable performance and dedication to the further growth and progpress of Pampanga

Masaplalang Anibersaryu quecayu!

Mabuhay!

Juan Miguel M. Arroyo
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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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The increasing choice of the city as a new regional corporate hub for investors and entrepreneurs, particularly in Central and North Luzon, has continually enhanced the emerging reputation of San Fernando as a unique and viable business center.

The success of Corporate Guarantee and Insurance Co., Inc. in the last decade has definitely contribued to this positive image that hopefully will continue to shape the direction and quality of progress of San Fernando in the years ahead

I, therefore, join the rest of San Fernando in saluting the company as it marks an important milestone.

Dr. REY B. AQUINO
City Mayor

HIGH FIVE FOR CGIC

CGIC
CORPORATE GUARANTEE &
INSURANCE COMPANY INC.

CGIC AT FIVE: The FORERUNNER IN CUSTOMER EXCELLENCE

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Laus is no stranger to success. Levy, as he is fondly referred to by colleagues, grew up in a family of entrepreneurs. At 25, he became the youngest branch manager of the former Commercial Bank and Trust Company in Guagua, Pampanga. But in spite of a promising career as a banker, Levy redirected his energies and focused on his passion for enterprise building that eventually led to the establishment of Carworld, Inc. - the first of more than twenty successful business ventures.

Established in the late 1970s, Carworld, Inc. is the crown jewel in the Laus Group of Companies. What began as a modest car dealership has risen to become the leading player in the sales of Mitsubishi Motors. Since its inception in 1978, the company has expanded beyond its stronghold in Pampanga to Bulacan, Tarlac and Olongapo City.

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The meteoric rise of Laus Group automotive business necessitated the creation of yet another enterprise to respond to the needs of its customers. Motor insurance and car dealerships have an intrinsic symbiotic relationship. More importantly, the standards of customer service must extend beyond the car sale cycle and include value-added services after the sale. There was no room to disappoint customers. Initially, the car dealerships partnered with insurance firms that were tasked to provide the requisite insurance. However, few firms could equal the standards of excellence set by the forward-looking Laus.

"Actually, the forerunner of CGIC was the Laus Insurance Agency," recalls CGIC Vice President and General Manager Gilbert M. Fernandez. "But we had problems which we thought would be eliminated if we put up our own insurance company."

The opportunity to provide seamless integration of the car sales process presented itself. Long before the word synergy was used to describe a major strategy for leading-edge firms in Pampanga, the Laus Group of Companies has already taken the lead. "We're very conscious about customer satisfaction and thru CGIC we have found the missing link," Laus adds. "As we created the synergy between the car sales business and automotive insurance, we became the exception to the rule."

And on July 25, 1997, the Insurance Commission granted CGIC its license to operate. Within a week, the company was launched at the Holiday Inn, Clark Field, Pampanga. Since then, CGIC has revolutionized the non-life insurance business. "We have proven that we can do it." Laus remarks. As the dynamo behind the flourishing Laus Group of Companies, of which CGIC is a major part of, his sharp business acumen has ensured an enviable position for CGIC. Having been in the non-life insurance industry for only five years, CGIC's net worth is now equivalent to P125 million and total assets have reached P188 million. Its gross premiums total P99 million, premiums earned are P87 million and paid-up capital as well as contributed surplus has reached P100 million.

The secrets behind the unparalleled success of CGIC lay in its simplicity. CGIC focuses on its niche. As contrasted with firms that would spend endless hours over-analyzing their options, CGIC capitalized on its main strength - its existing automotive customers. CGIC is not only interested in selling to customers, it is obsessed with building relationships. Positioning itself as the "Car Insurance Authority," CGIC gets the work done – and fast. "We provide quick processing of claims," Laus states. "For the record, we have no pending cases of insurance claims."

Laus credits his corporate experience, entrepreneurial parentage and sixth sense for the continued success of his business ventures. "Choose the right people," he advises. "I go by gut feel. There are a lot of academically qualified job applicants with an attitude problem. That is why I conduct the final screening for almost all aspirants before they start to work with me," Laus reveals. "At Laus Group, we are proud to have accomplished major milestones without having to retrench in the twenty-four years of our existence."

Leader. Visionary. Philanthropist. These are but some of the superlatives used to describe the low-profile Laus who has remained modest despite his innumerable achievements. Aside from automotive sales, the Laus Group is also involved in real estate (LGC Estate Resources), financing (Comtrust Finance and Investment Corporation), aviation (LGC Air Transport), media (Sun Star Pampanga), entertainment (Radioworld Broadcasting Corporation), and food (MTL Foods Corporation and LGC Foods).

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As part of its 5th anniversary celebration, CGIC will unveil its new corporate logo symbolizing the firm's corporate mission as the leading car insurance company. Expansion is CGIC's goal. It represents the company's continuous desire to move forward while constantly adapting to an ever-changing marketplace. The forward orientation of the rightmost element embodies its forward-looking vision; while two arrows forming a shield signifies the CGIC's core service of providing protection. The diamond-like visual is a stylized representation of CGIC customer's valued possessions protected by the company through its motor, marine, fire, casualty and bonds coverage. The blue color conveys stability, reliability, confidence and commitment. The red color signifies life, passion, dynamism and strength. The yellow backdrop accents the corporate warmth, goodwill and value that CGIC adds to its service.

The brains behind the Laus Group has raised his standards even notches above CGIC's current enviable status. The man has set his sights beyond Pampanga, Central and Northern Luzon. However, he will remain true to his zeal for customer excellence. "People first," Laus emphasizes. "We value our commitment." With Liberato P. Laus at the helm, CGIC is destined to keep its rightful place amongst the finest in the industry.

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The Western sections of Luzon and Visayas will experience occasional monsoon rains. The rest of Luzon will have cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms..

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Occasional monsoon rains	Hi 30°	Lo 24°
Baguio	Occasional monsoon rains	Hi 21°	Lo 15°
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32°	Lo 26°
Laoag	Occasional monsoon rains	Hi 29°	Lo 24°
Clark Zone	Occasional monsoon rains	Hi 30°	Lo 23°
Tagaytay	Occasional monsoon rains	Hi 29°	Lo 21°
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31°	Lo 25°
Calapan	Occasional monsoon rains	Hi 29°	Lo 23°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Occasional monsoon rains	Hi 28°	Lo 24°
Roxas	Occasional monsoon rains	Hi 28°	Lo 25°
Cebu	Partly Cloudys	Hi 32°	Lo 25°
Tacloban	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33°	Lo 25°
Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32°	Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32°	Lo 25°
Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32°	Lo 23°
Davao	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32°	Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/07/26/02

ROUNDUP

Rebels torch truck

DAVAO CITY—Suspected New People's Army rebels burned a truck owned by Dole Philippines allegedly because of the firm's refusal to pay revolutionary taxes. Reports reaching the regional police command here on Monday said at least 15 armed rebels stopped the truck on the national highway in Maragusan, Compostela Valley on Friday. The rebels then forced the truck driver, Samson Corpuz, his companion Jomar Diaz and an unidentified hitchhiker to get off the truck and torched the vehicle. NPA rebels earlier also toppled down the company's communications facilities in the province for the same "offense." *Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Electrocuted by clothesline

HERMOSA, Bataan—Three members of a family were electrocuted on Sunday when they touched a grounded clothesline in Barangay Burgos here. Police identified the fatalities as Wilfredo Dayo, 37; his wife Helen, 30; and their son Darlin, 7. The couple's other son, Darwin, 10, was in critical condition due to severe burns. The Dayos' neighbors said Helen asked her husband to re-connect the clothesline inside their house but they were not aware that it was touching a live wire. *Greg Refraccion, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Councilor gunned down

CANDON CITY—A councilor was gunned down by two men as he was leaving a cockpit in Barangay Calaoan here on Sunday. Police said Councilor Jaime Cobangco was attacked by Rudy Velasco, 49, and Eduardo Gombio, 40, both of Pangasinan, while he was about to board his car. The suspects, after shooting Cobangco, sought refuge in a nearby house and took hostage an 81-year-old woman. They surrendered after negotiations with the police. *Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Robbers nabbed

PINUKPUK, Kalinga—Police arrested two suspected members of a robbery gang operating in Kalinga and Cagayan after a shootout in Barangay Dugpa here last week. Police identified the suspects as Puzon Duguit and Leonard Topic. They were wounded after they engaged policemen in a gunfight in their safehouse at Sitio Bayaw in Barangay Dugpa. *PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Cloud seeding

TUGUEGARAO CITY—The Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Soil and Water Management here started last week a month-long cloud seeding operation to save rice and corn plants in Cagayan Valley. Engr. Vicente Galvez of the National Irrigation Administration said the abnormal gaps in rainfall in the region recently meant that the El Niño phenomenon has started earlier than its third quarter forecast. Reports showed that the drought has damaged at least P44 million worth of corn, rice and vegetables. *Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Diabetes test

LEGAZPI CITY—One of five employees of the Albay provincial capitol examined by the Provincial Health Office were found to have sugar above normal levels while the same number of employees were hypertensive, according to PHO chief Dr. Veronica Madulid. As a result of the findings, the office held a forum on the two diseases on July 19 at the provincial capitol. Diabetes is one of the leading causes of deaths in the Philippines next to tuberculosis, Madulid said. *Melanie Valenciano, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Nutritionist counts

LEGAZPI CITY—It pays to have a full-time nutritionist in town. Town officials found this out after Tiwi topped the 2001 nutrition evaluation conducted by the nutrition committee of the Provincial Health Office. Shirley Longasa, provincial nutrition committee chair, said Tiwi had an impressive record with the full support of Mayor Patria Gutierrez and the nutritionists who regularly monitor the nutritional status of the town's children. Longasa said that aside from Tiwi, only Polangui and Manito have full-time nutritionists. The two were judged second and third, respectively. *Melanie Valenciano, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Inmate found dead

LEGAZPI CITY—An inmate jailed for murder was found dead Saturday inside his prison cell at the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology District Jail on Burac Street, Barangay San Lorenzo, Tabaco City. Warden Salvador Coral identified the convict as Penanio Canofin, 57, a resident of Barangay Sugcad, Malinao, Albay. Coral said Canofin was mentally deranged and was to be brought to the Cadlan Mental Hospital in Pili, Camarines Sur. He had refused to eat before he died. The Tabaco Rural Health Unit was still conducting an autopsy. *Michael Jaucian, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

2 agencies start probe of use of housing funds for dredging

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Separate investigations have started on the use of at least P563 million originally intended for the housing needs of Mt. Pinatubo victims but was diverted to desilting and dredging projects in four provinces in Central Luzon.

The first investigation is being conducted by the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC), which supervises the project management office (PMO) of the defunct Mount Pinatubo Commission (MPC).

The PMO took over the Department of Budget and Management's MPC task force, which released the funds.

The Department of Public Works and Highways, whose district offices received the bulk of the funds, is conducting the second investigation.

The DPWH district office in Angeles City received one of the biggest shares, P77 million, although the city was not flood-prone.

The DBM-led task force also released some P73 million to provincial governments in Bataan, Pampanga, Tarlac and Zambales.

"We have started looking into it," HUDCC Assistant Secretary Conrado Dimalibot, also head of the PMO, told the INQUIRER by telephone on Wednesday.

Alfredo Tolentino, DPWH director in Central Luzon, said the preliminary investigation had begun after he ordered engineering district offices in Tarlac, Bataan, Zambales and Pampanga, including Angeles City, to submit reports on the controversial projects.

The Mt. Pinatubo victims group Ugnayan said these projects have not eased the floods. The Central Luzon Center for Emergency Aid and Rehabilitation, a disaster response institution, urged the DPWH to carry out "effective flood-control measures" in the Guagua-Pasac delta areas where communities in Pampanga, Bulacan and Bataan have experienced serious and prolonged floods.

In Baler, Aurora, Presidential Assistant for North Luzon Renato Diaz decried the spending of MPC funds on desilting and dredging projects. He said these were "a waste of public money."

Instead of dredging, he said the DPWH should build dams that will control water from the uplands.

Ironically, however, the PMO was bound to fold up for good.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, through Executive Order No. 6, tasked the PMO to deal with "pending critical concerns of the resettlement areas and to ensure the continued supervision of the MPC resettlement program."

Dimalibot confirmed reports that the PMO would operate only until December this year.

Sources at the MPC decried the impending closure, with one source lamenting that "the DBM has released the bulk of the funds for desilting and dredging projects whose efficiency is being questioned now."

The PMO has a lean staff of about 100 or less than half of what the MPC body used to have since Congress created it in 1992 to help Pinatubo victims through resettlement, livelihood and engineering projects.

Several sources said those really culpable in the alleged irregularities were congressmen who directly implemented the projects through their chosen contractors.

Boy, 7, dies of beating by schoolmates

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The Cebu City Schools Division has started investigating the death of a seven-year-old boy who died of internal bleeding on Monday, five days after four of his schoolmates beat him up inside the toilet of their school.

Leonilo Oliva, Cebu City School Division superintendent, yesterday sent a three-man panel to investigate the death of Zalbert Samonte, a Grade 1 pupil of Barangay Tejero, caused by the beating he got from four Grade 2 schoolmates.

Recaredo Borgonia, assistant school division superintendent and head of the panel, said they would also determine if school officials were negligent.

Borgonia met with Grade 2 teachers to identity the four pupils who beat up Zalbert during recess on July 17.

The four boys were likely to be between eight to nine years old.

Manuel Canales Jr., 7, a Grade 1 pupil from another section, told the panel he was inside the toilet when the beating took place but did not do anything to stop it.

Canales said one of the Grade 2 pupils hit Zalbert's right temple with a piece of concrete. The four left when Zalbert fell.

Zalbert did not tell his parents or his teachers about the beating. He went home in the afternoon as if nothing happened and attended classes on Thursday and Friday.

Zalbert had told his teacher, Josephine Binondo, that his right eye was swollen because of a cockroach bite. Binondo learned about the beating on Tuesday, a day after the boy's death.

22
CASES OF HRV EVERY
WEEK IN SMR
AT LEAST
ONE PER WEEK
-KARAPATAN-

BING GONZALES

PEOPLE'S SONA
Members of militant groups in Davao City hold a street play to demonstrate the abuses they said were committed by the military against people in the rural areas. The program was part of the groups' protest actions in time for President Macapagal-Arroyo's state of the nation address on Monday.

Dengue strikes Iloilo, kills 3

By Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Dengue fever has claimed three lives and downed 283 persons in the city and province of Iloilo during the first half of this year.

Health authorities identified the fatalities as Shianny Praise Datorin, 8, of Ajuy town; Rowena Arquiola, 21, of Dingle town; and six-month-old Mark Kelly Rosales of La Paz District, Iloilo City.

Datorin died in the second week of July and Arquiola in June. Rosales died last week.

But city health officials said while the Rosaleses reside here, the baby got the virus when his family brought him to his father's hometown, Ajuy.

Records showed that of 283 dengue cases reported in the first half of the year, 217 were from the province's 35 towns and one city and 66 from Iloilo City.

Cases of dengue had increased dramatically in the province since last month but health officials allayed fears of an epidemic because the dengue cases were not confined to one town and were distributed in the last six months.

Data showed that 105 cases of dengue were recorded in the January-June period. The figure went up to 217, increasing by 112 as of July 24.

Most dengue cases were reported in Badiangan town with 17, followed by Passi, 14; and Guimbal, 13.

Dengue has flu-like symptoms but could be fatal in advance stages. The virus is carried by the day-biting "Aedes aegypti" and "Aedes albopictus" mosquitoes, which breed in clear stagnant water.

The onset of the rainy season has kept public health officials on alert for dengue. They urged households to clean their surroundings and other places where dengue-carrying mosquitoes lurk.

Mercedes Depra of the City Health Office (CHO) said health workers and sanitary inspectors are organizing meetings to stress the need for cleanliness as a weapon against dengue.

Townsfolk threaten to seize, burn mining equipment

LUPON, Davao Oriental—Some three thousand residents of this gold-rush town threatened on Monday to "confiscate and destroy" mining equipment owned by Vineyard Mining Co., which they accused of causing massive ecological destruction in their place.

Residents of Barangay Calapagan and neighboring villages gave the mining firm until this week to start packing or they would confiscate and burn its equipment.

They said the firm's wastes were contaminating waterways from where residents get their drinking water.

Menesia Tecson, leader of the anti-mining group called Mandaya Maglulupa, said the mining firm's operation in the place is illegal "because they don't have mining permits either from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources office or from the provincial government."

On Monday, hundreds of anti-mining residents trooped to the capital town of Mati and urged Davao Oriental Gov. Maria Elena Palma Gil to put a stop to Vineyard's activities.

They cheered when Palma Gil, who chairs the provincial environment and natural resources council, promised to shut down Vineyard's operations as soon as possible.

"We could not allow a repeat of the mining disaster here that killed at least 25 people in 1987 and destroyed our ancestral home. The mining disaster has destroyed our rivers and contaminated our source of potable water. Many people were buried alive when a mountain called Maat Naarog in Barangay Calapagan collapsed. We will never allow mining operations to continue here, we have already learned lessons from our worst experience in the past," Tecson said.

The INQUIRER checked on Vineyard and found that it was still operating as of yesterday.

None of its officers were available to comment on the residents' allegations and demands. *Ferdinand Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

FIGHT FOR DOMINATION

NPAs raid safehouse of rival reb group

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—Twenty-two New People's Army (NPA) rebels on Monday raided a safehouse of the Revolutionary Proletarian Army (RPA) and took 10 high powered firearms and communications equipment in the hinterland Barangay of Bi-ao in Binalbagan town, 72.7 kilometers south of here.

The RPA is a breakaway faction of the NPA. They parted ways in 1997 over ideological differences.

Chief Insp. Edgardo Ordaniel, Binalbagan police chief, Tuesday said the 22 NPAs surprised their erstwhile comrades, about 14 RPA-Alex Boncayao Brigade men, who were relaxing in the safehouse at the time of the raid.

The NPAs led by a certain Ka Juaning took six M-16 rifles, one M-14 rifle, a Garand rifle, a Carbine, an M-203, a Kenwood handset and a cellular phone.

The safehouse of the RPA rebels headed by Ka Joner in Binalbagan is said to be the base of their operations in Isabela, Binalbagan and Himamaylan, police said.

The NPA and RPA-ABB have been engaged in a bitter war for dominance in Negros Occidental since the early 1990s.

The raid came at a time when Secretary Teresita Deles, head of the National Anti-Poverty Commission and chair of the Joint Enforcement Monitoring Committee (JEMC) of the government peace talks with the RPA-ABB, was in Negros to launch poverty alleviation programs in Hinoba-an and Candoni, the southernmost towns of Negros Occidental.

The poverty alleviation programs in Candoni will form part of confidence building measures with the RPA-ABB, she said,

Deles said after President Macapagal-Arroyo appointed the members of the JEMC, they will draw up guidelines for the peace pact with the RPA-ABB.

The JEMC is composed of two members from the government, two from the rebel group and a fifth who would be mutually acceptable to both sides.

The fifth is a priest, but she refused to identify him.

INQUIRER *Southern Luzon*

Editor Jun Bandayrel ◎ *Bureau Chief* Floreño G. Solmirano

Darkness veils Bauan town power deal

By Mei Magsino
Bauan, Batangas

EVEN before the constant brownouts started to hit Bauan in 1998, this first-class town of Batangas was already losing a multimillion-peso battle to keep the lights on for its 50,000 households.

Since July 1998, the Bauan government under Mayor Hermenegildo Dolor has failed to pay the National Power Corporation some P90 million in electric bills even as the residents paid their monthly dues on time to avert disconnection.

The Napocor would cut off its power supply to Bauan each time the town's franchised distributor of electric power, the Bauan Electric Light System (BELS), failed to pay its monthly obligation to the Napocor.

The BELS maintains and operates a department in the town government as part of its organizational structure.

Systems loss

For two years now, Bauan has been faced with a 47-percent transmission systems loss and has been trying hard to solve this power problem. The bearable amount of systems loss, by Napocor standards, is only up to 14 percent.

But on March 1, the search for a perfect solution to the power problem took a different turn when a newly formed corporation started to take over BELS.

Instead of paying the Napocor debt, the town entered into a P52.4-million-a-year management contract with the newly formed Southpost Systems Integrators and Developers Inc., a corporation with office in one of Makati City's residential areas.

Based on Securities and Exchange Commission records, the Southpost was formed by a group of electronics and communications engineering graduates and registered with the SEC only on October 8, 2001.

The SEC records also show that none of the incorporators has any masteral and doctoral degrees in management, and worse, there was no electrical engineer nor even someone with a working knowledge of power distribution.

Done Deal

As early as February, the SB has been discussing the MOA with Southpost during the council's regular sessions held in the office of Vice Mayor Vicente Magnaye. Southpost's legal consultant Emmanuel Magnaye is the vice mayor's nephew.

Since October last year, the SB's regular sessions have been held closed door inside the vice mayor's office, instead of the SB session hall where the public can watch what is going on.

Although the MOA states that management by Southpost took effect on March 1, it was only on March 12 when the mayor requested the SB to approve Resolution No. 35 series of 2002, authorizing Mayor Dolor to enter into a management contract with Southpost.

Prior to that, no notice of public bidding was announced or published in local papers and no public bidding was ever held, procedures required by the Local Government Code.

PEOPLE wait outside the Southpost office in Bauan, despite the rains or the heat of the sun, for their turn to pay their electric bills. MEI MAGSINO

On April 5, Dolor submitted to the SB a MOA between the town government and Southpost.

It was signed by the mayor and a certain Arnold Aguilar, who represented Southpost, and notarized by lawyer Arnulfo Arias on April 2.

Although the acknowledgement of the MOA was made by the SB on April 2, the signed final draft of the contract shows that the terms of agreement were arrived at as early as February. The contract was apparently already a done deal from the start.

Secret sessions

In a letter to Magnaye dated April 10, Councilor Juan Magboo requested that their sessions be held in public as the MOA was of great importance to the lives of the people of Bauan. He also mentioned that the SB had not been holding sessions in public since October last year.

But the vice mayor never answered the letter, which as an elected official, he was supposed to do in 15 days.

The SB session held privately on May 14, again in the office of Magnaye, included the Southpost management contract in the agenda.

Here, according to the SB minutes, the vice mayor inhibited himself from presiding over the session. Councilor Antonio Giman was chosen to preside.

Giman, in a unanimous vote by the SB members except for Magboo, suspended the internal rules.

Magboo said Councilor Edgard Valdez, who represented the Federation of the Sangguniang Kabataan, also objected to the MOA.

Like Magboo, Valdez said the contract was disadvantageous to the people of Bauan. Both of them said the contract did not even go through the proper procedure but their voices fell on deaf ears.

On the same May 14 session, the contract was approved by seven councilors while only two objected.

The two said the MOA was full of flaws and inconsistencies designed to bleed money from the town's coffers.

Takeover

Although the MOA was approved on May 14, Southpost had already moved in to Bauan as early as April. They rented and refurbished an office space in town.

That early, Southpost personnel also started interviewing and warning the BELS employees that they should cooperate with the Southpost, and even hired their own personnel in the payroll of the town, as stipulated in the contract.

But the trail of irregularities did not stop with the hastily approved management contract.

The 25-year management contract showed that the town government entered into a very disadvantageous deal that spells millions of people's money in an agreement that will not even solve the town's power problem.

Instead of finding a solution to pay the P90 million debt to the Napocor, the MOA states that the town of Bauan should provide the Southpost with a fresh capital of P40 million on the first year of its operation from the effectivity of the agreement.

It also stipulates that the town should provide the Southpost with an allocation from its share in the internal revenue allocation of P10 million for the subsequent years of operation.

After five years, the Southpost will have an exclusive option to buy the BELS for a maximum amount of P15 million.

According to former Bauan Mayor Paquito Castillo, when Meralco proposed to buy BELS in 1992, it was already worth P15 million.

"But of course I didn't allow BELS to be sold at that time because it was worth more than P15 million," Castillo said. "But ten years after, at P15 million, BELS is a hundred times undervalued. Its too unfair," he said.

Onerous deal

The management contract with the Southpost also states that it should be entitled to 15 percent of the net income of BELS.

However, if BELS has no net income equivalent to the Napocor billing, the MOA said Southpost should be entitled to a minimum "management fee" of P200,000 every month. Total billings a month ranges from P7 million to P9 million.

In a year, management fees alone for the Southpost totals P2.4 million.

For the past three years, due to system losses, BELS has been collecting less than the Napocor billing.

This means that the town, which is presently on heavy financial difficulty, would have to raise P200,000 a month to pay the Southpost.

If the town provides the Southpost P40 million fresh capital on its first year, P10 million share of the IRA, and P2.4 million in management fee, and still has the exclusive option to buy BELS at P15 million, the MOA could have been designed for the Southpost to take over BELS using the people's money, concerned residents noted.

The MOA also provides that the town should have an exclusive contract only with Southpost, while Southpost is free to conduct business with other companies.

The MOA also states that the Southpost has the option to hire its own technical consultants and experts who can manage BELS.

It also indicates that the BELS employees are at the mercy of the Southpost as it has the exclusive option to retain or fire them. But BELS will still be responsible for their salaries and benefits.

If the Southpost decides to retain the BELS employees, it can avail of their services without being responsible for anything.

Puzzling

According to Bauan budget officer Magdalena Subibi, the MOA with Southpost was approved by the executive and legislative officials of the town without informing the budget office and all department heads who were supposed to have a say in the contract.

"What's really puzzling is that they didn't even consult the budget office and that there was really no budget for the Southpost MOA," Subibi said.

She added that the MOA was not even necessary with the town's present financial difficulty.

Bauan had an actual income last year of P193 million.

Subibi said she only realized that a contract had been signed when the town council had already ratified it.

Even the province's Civil Service Commission office, according to personnel specialist Norma Abu, was not informed of the deal. But the town would even have a hard time if it backs out of the agreement.

The MOA also states that if the town pre-terminates the agreement without Southpost's consent, the town government "shall be liable for liquidated damages amounting to P50 million."

The MOA states that Southpost is free from any liability that may arise in the course of the agreement.

If a case is filed in court regarding the agreement, the MOA also states that the cases should be filed only in the courts of Makati City, where Southpost's office is located.

But the MOA also spells confidentiality. Article 9 of the agreement states that confidential information received by any party from the other should be kept strictly confidential for the duration of the agreement and three years after its termination.

Graft charges

With this nature of the contract, former mayor Paquito Castillo and four others charged Dolor, Magnaye and councilors Antonio Giman, Ronald Cruzat, Ryan Dolor, Rommel Dimayuga, Wilson Leandro Rivera, Vicente Talag, and Tomas Dalangin with graft and corruption before the Office of the Ombudsman on June 12.

Castillo said the contract, which took effect before it was ratified by the town council, placed the town's finances in a very disadvantageous position as it still owes the Napocor about P90 million in unpaid bills since July 1998.

But three weeks after the corruption charges were filed, the town council made and ratified amendments to the questioned contract on July 5.

In another special session held again privately in Magnaye's office, the involved management fee of P52.4 million a year was reduced to only P2.4 million.

Although the contract has been amended, Magboo said the entire process of ratifying the deal was a mockery of the entire legislative process of the town.

Richel Batay, Southpost finance chief, refused to be interviewed, saying the contract between Bauan and Southpost was not yet final.

This, despite the fact that Southpost has started collecting electric bills from the people since July 8.

It also issued a new application form that asks consumers to itemize the number of their electric appliances.

Dalangin, who is also the barangay captains federation chair, said the ratified MOA is not yet final and was approved only to enable Southpost to show the MOA to the Napocor.

Code of silence

During the brownout on June 24 and 25, the mayor could not be found in his office. His executive assistant Ernesto de Guzman, a parolee, said he "has no right" to say anything about the MOA or the brownout.

Mely Gomez, officer-in-charge of the Napocor's billing office in Biñan, Laguna, said the power cutoff was done after Bauan failed to pay its electric bill of P9.9 million for May.

"But Mayor Dolor paid us only P7 million on the first day the power was cut off," Gomez said, "On the second day, he paid only P2.5 million."

For the two-day brownout, the town that used to be bustling with life and light, lost some P20 million in products, services and busted electrical appliances.

Town public information officer Romer Castillo said he had no explanation for the brownout nor for the Southpost MOA.

"We were not furnished here with any reason for the brownout," he said, "and if your address is not in Bauan, you have no right to information."

Castillo said, "I have the right to conceal the town's secret. If I tell anything to the media, it might just be blown out of proportion."

Giman, the councilor who presided over the council meeting when the Southpost agreement was ratified, also declined to be interviewed, saying he is not in a position to say anything about the MOA or even about the brownout.

The INQUIRER has, for several times, tried hard to interview the town mayor, but each time his office aide or house helps would say he is not in his office or at home.

On the ninth time the INQUIRER went to his home in Barangay Aplaya, the mayor's housemaid said, "*Wala raw po dito si sir, sabi niya.* (Sir said he is not here)."

The INQUIRER also tried to contact the Southpost incorporators, but the telephone numbers from the SEC documents and those given by the town officials showed that the numbers were phony.

BAUAN councilor Juan Magboo shows a copy of the power management agreement between Bauan town and Southpost. MEI MAGSINO

THE DIGDIGON Conservation Farming Community at the foot of Mt. Isarog in Goa, Camarines Sur applies farming technologies that preserve the environment. JUAN ESCANDOR JR.

Farming model conserves forest

A CONVERGENCE of a non-government organization, the beneficiary community and government agencies launched late last week the second farming model in the country that conserves forests.

The project, dubbed "Conservation Farming Community" (CFC), is one of the nine similar projects piloted in the Philippines by CARE Philippines and the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research.

Raul de la Rosa, executive director of the project in Bicol, said the CFC in Barangay Digdigon in Goa, Camarines Sur aims to help the farming community in the vicinity of Mt. Isarog, to make use of the land near it to avoid forest destruction. Mt. Isarog is a declared national protected area.

De la Rosa said the Goa government, the Department of Agriculture, the Camarines Sur State Agricultural College and the Bicol Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research also support the Digdigon CFC.

He said the Digdigon CFC is a mix of appropriate farming technologies that directly mobilizes the community in demonstrating methods of agricultural production that preserve the environment.

These include the sloping agricultural land technology where cash crops are produced for the benefit of all the participating families.

The lessons derived from the demonstration are expected to improve the models in the 22 other communities that surround Mt. Isarog.

De la Rosa said the CFC is expected to yield farm practices that will enable families to meet their basic needs while they are being weaned away from their dependence on forest resources.

He said the Digdigon community has all the requirements to demonstrate a CFC model because most of the farm families depend on the nearby forest to augment their incomes.

De la Rosa said that among the areas in Bicol where CARE operates, the Digdigon farm families are very receptive to the concept of conservation farming. They have a high level of awareness on environmental issues that would eventually make them guardians of the peculiar biodiversity of Mt. Isarog.

He said they expect that the CFC, with the people in Digdigon mobilized, could contribute to several on-going initiatives that aim to protect and conserve the resources and environment of the protected area.

On Thursday last week, a training center in Barangay Digdigon was inaugurated. It will be the venue for training and lectures on conservation farming techniques.

The center was built through self-help and cooperation of the participating families in the conservation farming model demonstration. *Juan Escandor Jr.*

. . . And then there were 10

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out country's overseas employment program in 1974, which has the Philippines a 'global nation," Ople's statement said.

To his colleagues in the Senate, Ople expressed "unending gratitude for their understanding and support."

Done deal

"It's already a done deal," a Malacañang source told the INQUIRER last night before the scheduled dinner between President Macapagal and Ople at the Palace.

"It's just a question of when Senator Ople will formally assume the DFA post," the same source said. "This specific matter will also be taken up (during the dinner)," he added.

A press statement issued by Malacanang said that Ople "will commence his new duties in the very near future."

The INQUIRER learned that during dinner which lasted for nearly two hours the President had formally offered Ople the position vacated by Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. on July 15.

'On principle

Early this month, the INQUIRER had reported that Ople had accepted "in principle" the offer to head the Department of Foreign Affairs while vacationing in the United States. There, he was sounded out by two emissaries from Malacañang: Ms Macapagal's personal publicist Dante Ang and Bulacan Rep. Willie Villarama.

Ang was a former public relations handler of Ople, while Villarama was a former chief of staff of both Ms Macapagal and Ople.

The President herself had admitted that she had held informal discussions with Ople about the DFA posting six months ago citing "policy differences" with Guingona and the need to reorganize the Cabinet.

Too late

The developments at the Palace last night annul Speaker Jose de Venecia's endorsement of Rep. Jose Apolinario Lozada Jr. (Negros Occidental, Lakas) as the next DFA secretary.

In a letter to President Macapagal on Tuesday, De Venecia said Lozada would be "an asset to the Cabinet and will faithfully execute the foreign policy programs of your administration."

Lozada, chair of the House committee on foreign relations, said he would accept the position if offered to him.

"I would be happy to serve if the President considers me for it but I did not solicit (an appointment)," Lozada said.

Bukidnon Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri, who had earlier objected to giving the DFA post to the opposition, said he and several other congressmen would also support Lozada's appointment.

"If Congressman Lozada is chosen, the President would have made a better decision. It will be a non-controversial move," Zubiri said.

Zubiri said Lozada was acceptable to both sides of the political fence and would be a better choice than the 74-year-old Ople because the congressman was "young and dynamic."

"With all due respect to Senator Ople, I believe Congressman Lozada would have the advantage because he's primed for the 21st century," Zubiri said.

De Venecia said the President would do well to appoint Lozada on account of his qualifications as a career diplomat, as an official of the Ramos administration and as member of the House.

"I know Representative Lozada as a team leader and a man of integrity and competence. As the vice president for international affairs of the Lakas-NUCD, he has been instrumental in giving direction to the party's foreign policy initiatives," he said.

Rose from the ranks

De Venecia said Lozada was a DFA casual employee who rose from the ranks and served in Philippine missions in Vienna as consul general, as charge d'affaires to the Holy See in the Vatican and as ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the Republic of Palau.

Lozada also served as appointments secretary and presidential adviser for foreign affairs to President Fidel Ramos.

De Venecia said Lozada was a recipient of various awards, including the Order of Sikatuna with rank of Datu, the Philippine Legion of Honor, the Encomienda de la Orden del Merito Civil from King Juan Carlos I of Spain and the title of Orden Libertador Bernardo O'Higgins from the president of Chile.

Lozada's office said the DFA Personnel Association, Kasama which is a group of overseas Filipinos, local officials and residents of Negros Occidental and the Negros and Iligan Press Clubs had also endorsed Lozada.

Jawo: Edong behind black propaganda

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tion. He said it was unfair that he would be blamed for Jaworski's "predicament" because it was the latter who left the opposition despite promising not to.

"He already committed a sin against us, and now he's adding another sin by blaming us (*Huwag naman. May kasalanan na nga siya sa amin, eh dadagdagan pa niya ng isa pang kasalanan*)," Angara said.

Angara also said he could not blame his former ally for thinking ill of the opposition.

"Someone's putting him up to it (*May bumubuyo diyan*)," Angara said, adding that Malacañang wanted the opposition to break apart.

According to Angara, who served as PNB chair under deposed President Joseph Estrada, Jaworski must stop getting irked by insinuations and face the issue of the loan squarely by explaining it to the people.

He pointed out that loans with government institutions were public records that could easily be traced.

Asked about the loan, Jaworski said he had been "very transparent from Day One."

He wondered why the issue cropped up just when he was mulling over his transfer to the administration coalition, which served to break the Senate impasse.

"I was shocked that this is happening," he said. "Why are they suddenly asking about a loan?"

'Dirty politics'

Senate President Franklin Drilon said "dirty politics" was behind the attempt of certain quarters to relate Jaworski's defection to the PNB loan.

"Senator Jaworski did not ask for any concession, and no concession was given," Drilon said.

He said that he was present at the negotiation, and that the loan with the PNB was not part of the talks. What was discussed was the possibility that Jaworski would be given a slot in the administration's senatorial ticket in 2004, and even then there was no assurance to this effect, he said.

Asked who could be behind the smear campaign against Jaworski, Drilon said it could be the opposition.

He pointed out that the issue of the loan never surfaced when Jaworski was still with the other camp.

"Did you ever hear of this when he was in the opposition?" Drilon said. "Now that (he) is with the administration, the issue is being brought up."

But opposition Sen. Vicente Sotto III said Drilon should not make sweeping generalizations.

"That's none of my business. That's his loan (*Wala naman akong pakialam dyan, eh. Utang niya yan, eh*)," Sotto said.

On Tuesday, Jaworski explained the circumstances of the loan. Yesterday he reiterated that he and his business partner had indeed obtained the loan from PNB but that the partnership had since been dissolved.

He said everything was "all documented."

Jaworski claimed that whatever assets were left to him were "not government-funded."

"They were privately funded, and that responsibility I have to take care of. So where is the impropriety there?" he said.

He also maintained that his transfer to the administration coalition had "no price tag."

"Neither financial nor political considerations motivated my decision," he said.

Earlier, Jaworski, a son-in-law of administration Sen. Ramon Revilla, said family pressure compelled him to jump ship.

Spying

Administration Sen. Joker Arroyo came to his new colleague's defense and said the rumor about Jaworski was "typically Angara."

Arroyo said Angara "spies on his allies while they are friends, in anticipation of using whatever evidence he has gathered just in case they should part ways."

Thus, he said, "what guarantee is there for the other minority members (that they are not) presently the object of some kind of spying by the Angara group?"

"Imagine, one day after Senator Jaworski changed sides, Senator Angara had the supposed goods on Jaworski," Arroyo said. "In short, he had it all along."

Drilon said that he had asked Jaworski about the loan and that he was satisfied with the documents presented.

He said Jaworski took out the loan even before the former basketball player became a senator.

"This is adequately secured and he has collateral for it, so I don't think he would need any concession," Drilon said.

Opposition Sen. Rodolfo Biazon said, "everyone must give Senator Jaworski the benefit of hearing his explanation for what he did."

But Sotto said: "Someone's stoking the fire so he would burn his bridges (*May gumagatong diyan para tuluyan na siyang magalit sa amin*)."

Sotto also said Jaworski's defection was not an issue to him. He said he respected his former colleague's decision to switch allegiance.

'Patriotism'

Dodi Limcaoco, the President's adviser on media and religious affairs, said loans had nothing to do with Jaworski's defection.

"Patriotism prompted Senator Jaworski to join the administration," Limcaoco said in a statement issued by the People Power Coalition, of which he is spokesperson.

He said Jaworski's defection "established the majority in the Senate, thus breaking the impasse" and allowing the chamber "to finally focus on its legislative agenda then obstructed by severe politicking."

Limcaoco also said, "opposition senators are becoming desperate in their attempts to pull down their former party mate." ***With a report from Dona Z. Pazzibugan***

GMA admits helping to control Senate

From page A1

terday, the President said her help involved the recruitment of opposition Senators Robert Jaworski and Blas Ople. Earlier, both the President and Palace officials declared that she was keeping a hands-off stance vis-à-vis the long Senate impasse although it.was well known that her lieutenants, including her longtime publicist Dante Ang, were wooing opposition senators to break the deadlock.

"The important thing is, the institution of the Senate should be restored in the eyes of the people. The constant gridlock and squabbling should end with a clear majority," Ms Macapagal told reporters.

She said that while she let the senators resolve the Senate crisis by themselves, she intervened because "they asked me for help."

"Yeah, they did (ask for) specific help, like for instance receiving Jaworski, the meeting I'm having (last night) with Ople," she said, adding:

"As President of the administration, as president of the coalition and chair of the party (Lakas-NUCD), I will help. But largely (the work of resolving the impasse) was theirs."

Ang was also said to have convinced opposition Sen. Vicente Sotto III to accept the post of "overseer" of the new Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB).

At the Senate, Sen. Juan Flavier tried to end the resurgent squabble by proposing a "win-win" solution—adopting Senate President Franklin Drilon's adjournment of the chamber on June 3 and approving one by one the four bills adopted by the opposition in its June 3-6 session.

Flavier offered the formula to Drilon in an attempt to cut the debate on the legality of the "rump" session conducted by the opposition and its reorganization of the Senate committees.

The senator acknowledged that by approving the June 3 journal of the administration coalition, the three-day session of the opposition would be rendered nullified.

But in exchange for this, he proposed that the Senate as a whole approve each of the four measures, including the proposed absentee voting law, passed by the opposition.

Sounding out Ople

Ms Macapagal had dinner with Ople last night in Malacañang, at which he accepted the top post of the Department of Foreign Affairs in place of Vice President Teofisto Guingona.

She told reporters at the luncheon that she "sounded out" Ople six months ago: "I confided I was having policy differences with the Vice President. And I said it might come to a point where I would need to have a reorganization."

"Speaking out loud, I said in his case he would make a good (foreign affairs secretary)," she said, adding that she and Ople agreed on most policy issues.

The President said Ople was on the Palace search committee's shortlist, which also includes incumbent and retired career diplomats.

But she denied that she herself had persuaded Jaworski to jump ship.

She claimed that she did not know who did, and that she only spoke with him shortly before he announced his defection last Sunday.

"On that day Sen. Ramon Revilla called me up (to say) that (his son-in-law) Jaworski wanted to see me before he made the announcement," she said.

Correction

First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, who was present at the luncheon, corrected the President at this point, saying Jaworski made his announcement first, and then she had dinner with him the next day.

Without looking up from her plate, the President countered: "No."

Minutes later Ang joined the luncheon. Upon seeing Ang, Arroyo rose and asked the publicist to join him in one of the side rooms.

As for Sotto, who is reported to be preparing to jump ship after his acceptance of the "overseer" post at the DDB, Ms Macapagal said she was so far satisfied that he joined her administration's campaign against illegal drugs.

"Well, I certainly would like him to help the administration," she said. "However, whether he'll leave the opposition or not . . . depends on him."

She said Sotto would chair the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council oversight committee at the DDB.

Since this is not an executive position, Sotto need not resign from the Senate, she said.

As oversight committee chair, Sotto cannot exercise jurisdictional function over the DDB. But he can "recommend (policies) and point out mistakes," the President said.

'Fair enough'

Flavier said his proposed formula was "fair enough, since all of us wanted to approve those bills, too."

He said even Senate Majority Leader Loren Legarda agreed with the formula.

Drilon said Flavier's proposal would be noted and relayed to the other majority senators at their caucus.

"We will study it very carefully. We are after the interest of the Senate so that we can all go back to work," he said.

Opposition leader Sen. Edgardo Angara said he would welcome any solution that would not render illegal the work he and his colleagues did in the Senate on June 3-6.

He insisted that the opposition, being then the new majority, legally reorganized the Senate committees in accordance with the rules of the chamber.

In Sen. Rodolfo Biazon's opinion, the matter was "very easy to resolve."

"Just declare all positions vacant, then proceed to fill up the committees," he said. "They can have all the committees if they want since they have the numbers now."

Biazon stressed that a process should be followed instead of just declaring the June 3-6 session illegal and the committee reorganization void.

The opposition again recognized Legarda as the majority leader but deferred action on Sen. Manuel Villar's designation as Senate president pro tempore pending the outcome of the meeting last night between Ms Macapagal and Ople.

Drilon said it did not matter whether the opposition recognized Villar or not.

"Senator Villar has always been the Senate president pro tempore, and assuming that the appointment of Senator Ople (as foreign secretary) pushes through, that should not change the picture," he said.

Tidbits

Earlier at the session hall, Sen. Joker Arroyo promised anew to "behave" until the Senate standoff had been resolved.

Sen. John Osmeña told Drilon that he did not like the shape of his room, and asked for permission to get Ople's room and chair in the event that the latter moved to the DFA.

Drilon said he could not act on this request until Ople became secretary of foreign affairs.

It was Osmeña's defection to the opposition that brought about the impasse at the Senate.

When GMA buys fish, it has . . .

From page A1

modated the President, who arrived at 9:10 a.m. She bought a kilo of fresh medium-sized *galunggong* at P60. She made sure the fish was fresh by inspecting its gills.

Her visit to the market was prompted by incredulous consumers who called radio stations a day after the President's State of the Nation Address to point out that the fish Ms Macapagal bought last week at P60/kilo must have been either stale or small.

In her Sona, the President mentioned the price of *galunggong* to emphasize that food prices were stable under her administration.

Hours after her visit to the market, the President hosted a luncheon for a group of Palace reporters who expected to be served *galunggong*. But imported salmon steak was the main fare. Still, the table talk was *galunggong*.

"The point is (*galunggong* is sold at) P80 a kilo during Erap's time and P60 a kilo during mine," Ms Macapagal said.

"The *tinderas* (vendors) are up in arms about all those reports that it's the stale and small *galunggong* that's sold for P60. They were showing me the gills. *Yan ba ang panis?*" Ms Macapagal said.

She said she found that small *galunggong* were sold at P40 a kilo, while the regular-sized ones were sold at P60 a kilo.

Not content, she directed Trade Secretary Manuel "Mar" Roxas II to put out full-page ads "to tell the public where to buy *galunggong* at P60 a kilo."

The President said vendors at Nepa-Q Mart, also in Quezon City, were also selling *galunggong* at P60 a kilo, while the fish was P65 a kilo at Farmers Plaza in Cubao.

The President visited Commonwealth Market at the height of the monsoon rains last week. She was accompanied yesterday by Quezon City Mayor Sonny Belmonte and housing chief Mike Defensor.

Gloria's brod sits on board of College Assurance Plan

From page A1

legedly due to Palace intervention.

The trust fund deficiency has put in doubt the ability of the company to pay benefits to more than 500,000 plan holders.

An SEC official said the SEChad written trustee banks of CAP directing them to pull CAP's investments out of unlisted companies and to reduce CAP's investments in real estate. Several trustee banks manage CAP's trust fund.

Under SEC rules, trust fund investments of pre-need companies must comply by the end of the year with the limits the SEC has set for certain investments, such as real estate, fixed-income securities and stocks.

At present, CAP's trust fund exceeds the real estate limit. It also has investments in unlisted firms.

The SEC official said CAP incurred a P2.5-billion fund deficiency partly because of the market decline of its investments in affiliates and related firms.

CAP officials and directors, including CAP president Enrique Sobrepeña, met with SEC Chair Lilia Bautista and other SEC commissioners on Tuesday afternoon to present the company's proposed funding scheme.

The SEC reportedly agreed in principle to CAP's proposed funding scheme but Emil Aquino, the SEC's non-traditional securities and instruments department director, said the department was still evaluating the proposal.

More than two years ago, Agile, a foreign consultancy firm funded by USAID, questioned "conflict-of-interest" transactions of pre-need companies, such as those of CAP with the Fil-Estate Group of Companies.

In a study, Agile cited the investments of the CAP Group in Fil-Estate Land Inc. and Fil-Estate Corp. The president and chief executive officer of the CAP Group sat on the boards of the two companies as of 1998.

The study also mentioned a P2-billion investment of the CAP Group in Fil-Estate Management Inc. in 1998.

Agile also noted that CAP and CAP Pension and two other top pre-need firms placed their trust funds with affiliate banks.

"The affiliations of the parties raise questions about the independence of the trustees, the involvement of the CAP Group management in these investment decisions and whether these transactions constitute 'unsound practices' within the BSP Rules, in the face of the potential conflicts of interest issues raised by the investments," Agile had said.

Edwin Pineda, University of Asia and Pacific senior economist, said he was not surprised that CAP had 2.5 billion in trust fund deficiencies.

"We think this is just a symptom of the deep-seated and long-running deficiencies in the sub-sector," Pineda said.

Rep. Jesli Lapus, who has called for congressional hearings on the pre-need industry, said trust fund deficiencies could even be understated if the economic assumptions such as interest rates were too liberal.

In the Senate, Sen. Panfilo M. Lacson filed yesterday a resolution calling on the Senate to institute measures to protect the public against pre-need companies that renege on their contracts.

"We must safeguard the welfare of clients of these pre-need companies. Most of the clients placed their hard-earned money in these firms to ensure that their future needs are met," Lacson said in a statement.

As of press time, the SEC was still evaluating CAP's proposal to plug its trust fund deficiency of P2.5 billion. CAP education plan said it would raise P2.5 billion consisting of cash and other assets to boost its trust fund to P12 billion.

Other members of the CAP board are Francisco Rodrigo Jr., Alejandro R. Roces, Enrique A. Sobrepeña Jr., William Russell L. Sobrepeña, Rafael E. Evangelista Jr., James Marsh Thomson, Ernesto M. Espaldon, Coronado Munasque, Romulo M. Espaldon and Gillian Akiko Thomson.

5 top Abu leaders face charges in US

JEFFREY Schilling

MARTIN Burnham

GRACIA Burnham

EDIBORA Yap

From page A1

Isnilon Totoni Hapilon, Aldao Tilam, Jainal Antel Sali Jr., and Hamsiraji Marusi Sali.

All five are still at large. Tilam, also known as Abu Sabaya, was reportedly killed in an encounter at sea with government troops last month. His body, however, has yet to be recovered.

"The indictment charges the five named defendants with conspiracy resulting in death, hostage-taking and three counts of hostage-taking resulting in death," Thompson said.

He said a federal grand jury in Washington handed down the five-count indictment that mirrored a previous one returned under seal in February.

Thompson said the first indictment was kept under seal so as not to endanger the lives of hostages being held then by the Abu Sayyaf.

He said Tuesday's indictment was updated to include American missionary Martin Burnham and Filipino nurse Edibora Yap "to the list of people whose deaths resulted from these criminal acts."

Burnham, 42, was killed, together with Yap, on June 7 when government troops clashed with an Abu Sayyaf group led by Sabaya in Zamboanga del Norte. Burnham's wife, Gracia, was rescued.

Sabaya's group beheaded in Basilan on June 11, 2001 another American hostage, Guillermo Sobero, who was seized with the Burnhams and 17 others at Palawan's Dos Palmas Resort.

The initial charges date back to the August 2000 kidnapping of American Jeffrey Schilling, who eventually escaped his captors in Basilan after a $10-million ransom demand went unheeded for seven months.

"The justice department is committed to working with the government of the Philippines to bring the leaders of the Abu Sayyaf to justice," Thompson said.

The US Embassy in Manila said Washington had made no demands for the handover of the Abu Sayyaf leaders, adding the US government was supporting Ms Macapagal's efforts to prosecute them.

"There is no such demand," US Embassy spokesperson Karen Kelley said on local television. "We are following the lead of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo who stated that it's the intention of the Philippines to bring to justice those . . . responsible for these crimes and we will certainly be supportive of her efforts."

FBI agents

Ms Macapagal said the indictment might allow FBI agents to run after the Abu Sayyaf leaders.

"(US) police action is not circumscribed under the Constitution. Nonetheless, my policy is that Filipinos will do the fighting (against the Abu Sayyaf)," she said.

Even so, Ms Macapagal stressed that US law enforcers, who have been operating in the country since January, were powerless without the help of local authorities.

She said she would consult with legal advisers regarding the issue.

The Department of Justice said the Philippine government had had first priority on trying any captured Abu Sayyaf leader.

"The US indictments are without prejudice to the Philippine courts' primary jurisdiction over arrested ASG leaders," the Department of Justice said in a statement.

"The Philippine government stands committed in bringing to the courts of justice individuals such as the ASG leaders, who are responsible for atrocities and terrorist acts in this part of the region," the statement added.

State Prosecutor Ricardo Cabaron told reporters: "If they are arrested, we will insist that they will be tried first here before they will be turned over to America."

Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Roy Cimatu said the bandit leaders were already facing charges of kidnapping and murder in local courts, "so I think they will have to face their charges here."

"We have jurisdiction over them since the crimes were committed here," Cimatu added.

Death penalty

If the defendants were caught, taken to the United States to stand trial and convicted, they could face the death penalty on four of the five counts, US justice officials said.

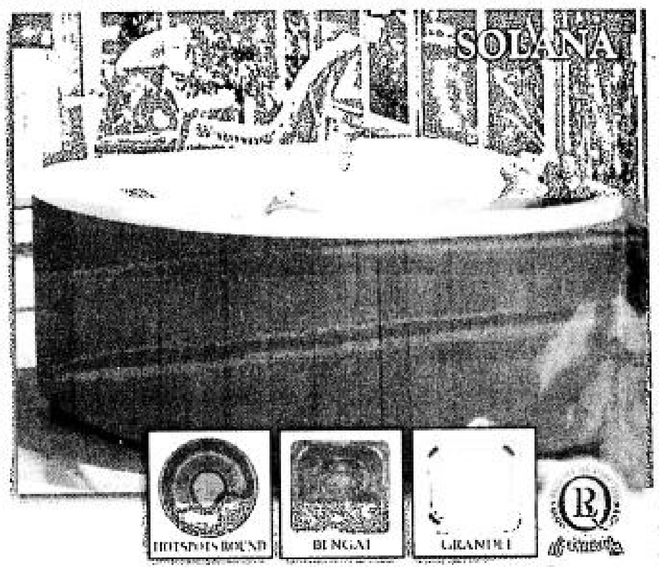
Washington has offered a reward of up to $5 million for information leading to the capture of the five leaders.

Janjalani, also known as Abu Muktan, is considered the Abu Sayyaf spiritual leader. Hapilon, alias Abu Musab, is second in command. Sali Jr., alias Abu Solaiman, is a commander known as "the Engineer." The other wanted Sali is also a commander known as Tiberkis or Jose Ramirez.

Officials said the Abu Sayyaf, designated by the US Department of State as a "foreign terrorist organization," had been weakened by the RP-US joint counterterrorism exercise in Western Mindanao.

About 1,000 US soldiers are in Western Mindanao training Filipino troops in fighting the Abu Sayyaf, who are supposedly waging a campaign to create a separate Islamic state.

The training is to end formally on July 31 but the Pentagon says it will continue its close military ties with Manila. ***Reports from AP, AFP, Reuters, Dona Pazzibugan, Martin P. Marfil and Michael Lim Ubac***



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Not everything's easy for Ernie Els

'When I've played well, Tiger still has beaten me. What do you do?' Els said last week before the British Open started. 'You have to play better.'

By Doug Ferguson

GULLANE, Scotland —Now that Ernie Els finally has the silver claret jug, maybe it's time for him to lose his nickname.

The Big Easy he isn't.

He only appears that way because of his 6-foot-4 (190 cm) frame and a syrupy swing so natural it looks as though he's not even trying. The smile comes easily, too, making Els look more like a gentle giant than a guy capable of stepping into the ring with Tiger Woods.

Don't be fooled.

"People think, to look at him, he doesn't try too hard. But believe me, he does," said Nick Price, who knows the South African better than most.

There are times when Els dresses the part.

He was the last man in the field to show up for the Match Play Championship early last year in Australia, a long way to go right after the holidays. The sun was setting on the final practice round, and tournament officials wondered whether he would even show up.

Els pulled into the drive at Metropolitan Golf Club about 9 p.m., wearing shorts, beach sandals and a T-shirt. He slowly climbed out of the car and looked at the small entourage there to greet him, then popped open a beer and grinned.

"Happy New Year, everybody," he said with that easy smile, before hopping into a cart to see the golf course for the first time - just 18 hours before his first match (which he won).

There are times when there is nothing easy about Els.

Birdie chances

In 2000, in the clubhouse at Augusta National after missing three good birdie chances on the final holes and finishing three strokes behind Vijay Singh, he repeatedly slammed his fists onto the table and cursed.

This is a man who doesn't take losing easily.

He rarely will say he's proud of himself, or that he had an enjoyable week, after a major championship ends without his name on the trophy.

Els only sounds like a pushover when he lavishes praise on Woods, when all he's doing is telling the truth. Woods is tough to beat. What else is there to say about a player who has won eight majors and 21 of his last 56 PGA Tour events?

"When I've played well, Tiger still has beaten me. What do you do?" Els said last week before the British Open started. "You have to play better."

Els has done his part. Getting the results hasn't been easy.

After setting a record as the first player to be runner-up in three straight majors— two of those to Woods by a combined 23 strokes—Els was determined to challenge Woods last year. He played the first three events and played well enough to win them all.

Winless season

Instead, the best he could do was third, and he suffered his first winless season on the PGA Tour since he joined in 1994 after winning the U.S. Open.

Back to work he went, and this time it paid off—for a while, at least.

He built an eight-stroke lead over Woods at Doral, then withstood a furious charge in the final round before hanging on for a two-stroke victory. It was his first PGA Tour victory with Woods in the field since 1997.

"That counts even more in my book," he said.

The majors continued to be elusive. Els was the only player to seriously challenge Woods on the back nine at the Masters. He was the butt of jokes, however, after trying one senseless shot after another at the 13th hole and taking an 8.

"That fiasco at Augusta hurt him a bit," Price said. "He's just coming back from that."

Els' victory in the British Open might push him over the hump.

No, it wasn't a masterpiece at Muirfield. He led by three shots with five holes to play and was trailing by one stroke with two holes to play. The recovery was nearly as spectacular as his collapse.

Brilliant save

He pulled himself up and got into a four-man playoff. Four steady pars sent him into a sudden-death playoff with unheralded Thomas Levet of France. One brilliant bunker save under enormous pressure brought him a British Open title.

"One of the hardest tournaments I've ever played," Els said.

How much harder would it have been had Woods been in contention? That's stuff to be sorted out over a pint in the pub.

Lest anyone believe Woods never would have folded on the back nine in a major, consider what happened at Medinah three years ago in the PGA Championship.

Woods nearly wasted a five-stroke lead by playing four holes in 4 over. He wound up winning by one stroke over 19-year-old Sergio Garcia.

Major championships are never easy to win.

Els still hasn't beaten Woods in a head-to-head battle since Bay Hill in 1998, but he certainly took a small step in the right direction at Muirfield.

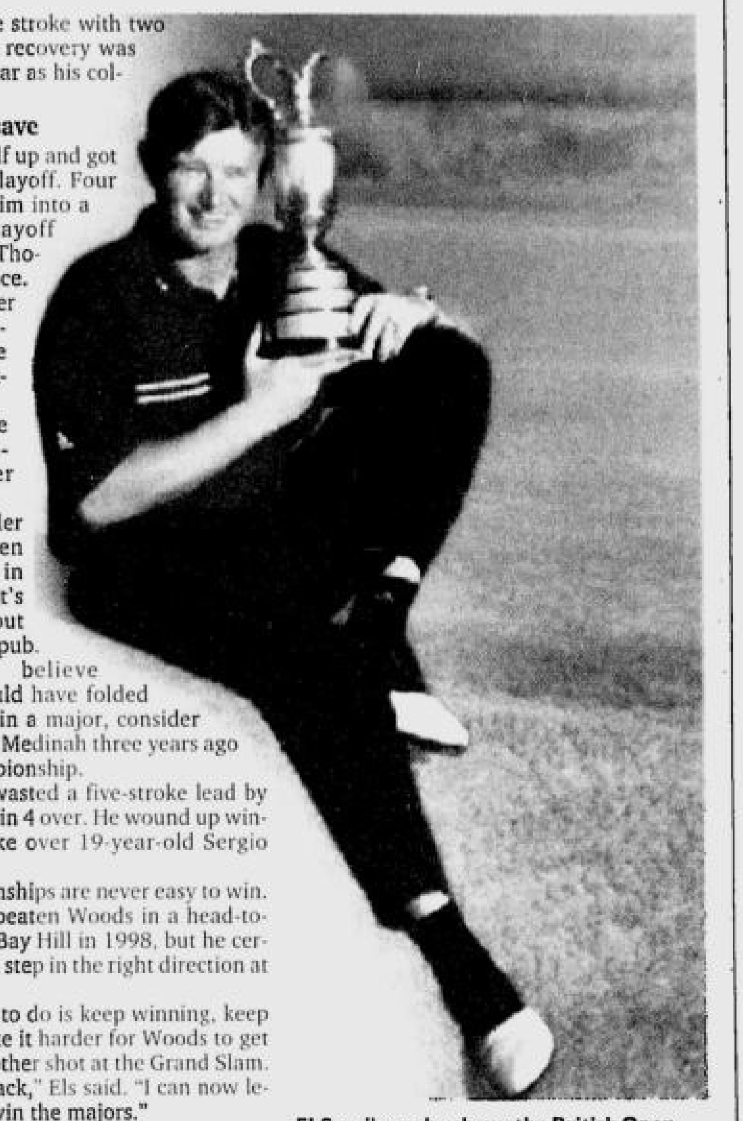
Now all he has to do is keep winning, keep working, and make it harder for Woods to get in position for another shot at the Grand Slam.

"I'm back on track," Els said. "I can now legitimately try to win the majors."

He knows one thing.

It won't be easy.

AP



ELS smiles as he shows the British Open silver claret jug to the crowd. AP

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Rey shows the way

COMMENTARY

By Vic Vic Villavicencio

HALFWAY through the year's monthly fishing calendar, it is safe to say this is not a bad one. Not bad at all, going by the statistics highlighted during the recent mid-year awards dinner hosted by the Philippine Game Fishing Foundation at Kamayan-Saisaki Edsa.

The photos featured in the mid-year edition of the The Philippine Angler, official publication of the PGFF, tell the same story and bolster the good news assessment. And the 37 anglers who received their trophies, understandably, smilingly nod in agreement.

Midway into the race for Angler of the Year honors is, amid good-natured booing from his angling colleagues, current PGFF president Rey Buencamino is again in the lead. If his fishing luck holds, Rey takes his place in PGFF's version of Hall of Fame. And then he relinquishes the PGFF presidency, after three successful terms, to new leadership.

By the way, just two steps behind Rey Buencamino in the AOY race is the country's most active lady angler these days: Mayenn Ordoveza. The name is not new: She has been mentioned among the likes of Pat Osias and Rosie Valencia. And with still six months to go Mayenn theoretically can still catch up or overtake second-ranked Edwin Guzman, or Rey himself.

Both Mayenn and Edwin are registered for the July tuna fishing competition in Palawan, indicating that they, and others in the top ten list, have no intention of abandoning the race. Expect fishing competition fireworks of sorts in the third and fourth quarter tournaments.

After Palawan, there are two Calatagan tournaments, followed by one in Talaotao, and then the final one in Caliraya for bass.

Meanwhile, it looks like the "Bancaravan Sa Kalikasan" project of fishing and sportswriting colleague Vic Milan is a go. Anglers Amado A. Dy, Judes Echauz and Bobby Garcia are among the first to lend encouragement and support.

More about Vic's island-hopping odyssey with tourism promotion and marine conservation goals, in a future piece.

SPORTSWATCH

Sports seminar ends Aug. 9

THE SPORTS Physiotherapist Seminar Series, sponsored by Saucony, will culminate on Aug. 9 at the Sports Medicine Clinic of the Moro Lorenzo Sports Center in Ateneo. Titled "Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome and Low Back Rehabilitation: A Manual Therapy Approach," the seminar was designed for physical therapists, athletics trainers and professionals. Saucony, manufacturer of high-quality footwear since 1898, has been promoting new trends and techniques in sports rehabilitation.

Active chess gets going July 27

MANUEL Yu of Risk Saver Insurance tries to prove his worth when the second leg of the 2002 Philippine Executive Active Chess Express or PEACE 2002 series reels off on July 27 at the Landbank Plaza in Malate, Manila. Yu, who sued to compete in strong non-master tournaments, tied for first with engineer Joseph Galindo in the Success section in the first leg but was edged out in the tiebreak. Galindo has since returned to his job in Saudi Arabia. Business executives and professionals who wish to join PEACE 2002 may contact the Acca with tel. 892-8759 for other details.

Coulthard triumphs in Sepang

KUALA LUMPUR—The newest formula driver sensation of New Zealand and cousin of a Formula One driver, Fabian Coulthard, won in dramatic fashion last Sunday's Asian Formula 2000 Series in the Sepang International Circuit, Malaysia. Coulthard won rounds five and six, which turned the tables on qualifying hopefuls led by Zed-San Miguel Beer-Mp Turbo Team Philippines Mike Potenciano, who took a spectacular pole position in his last qualifying lap in a wet track for round five. Mike again belted out a great third place in the dry, second qualifying session, even though he had traffic in front of his best lap.

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

GOLF: LPGA

Shoprite Classic, Final Round at 12 noon on Star Sports

PGA B.C. Open, Final Round at 2 p.m. (r). Highlights at 11 p.m.on Star Sports

BASEBALL:

Wednesday Night Baseball at 7 a.m. and 1 p.m. on ESPN

BASKETBALL:

World Pro Basketball Challenge - Harlem Globetrotters vs ABA Select at 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. (r) on ESPN

RACING TIPS

At San Lazaro By Mr. 999

Race 1—1. Fly Away/Rain Check 2. Photogenic

Race 2—1. Naughty 2. Gifted Angel 3. Modern Classic 4.Super Dancer 5. Renegade 6. Silver Lining

Race 3—1. Are You Happy 2. Dallas 3. Montpellier 4. Well Done

Race 4—1. Desert Deb 2. High Pocket 3. Mythical Forest

Race 5—1. Siete de Marso 2. Brute Force 3. Main Event 4. Shining Pyramid

Race 6—1. Maayo Kaayo 2. Our Hope 3. Red Bells 4. Tumatagînting 5. Brazen Truth

Race 7—1. Spanish Eyes/Classic Native 2. Peek A Boo 3. Best of Times

Race 8—1. Bulakena 2. Speed Charm 3. Hercules 4. Standing Ovation

Race 9—1. King Aldrin 2. Front Page 3. Lady Queen 4. Meal Ticket 5. Tawagin Mo Na 6. Sir Olizon

Lance: Every second counts

LES DEUX-ALPES, France—For Lance Armstrong, every second counts in the three-week Tour de France.

Spanish rival Joseba Beloki surprised him briefly in Tuesday's 15th stage–the longest of the race at 140.43 miles (226.5-kilometers)–by surging ahead in the final stretch.

Such a late challenge could only have taken a few seconds off Armstrong's big overall lead, but even that would have been too much for the Texan.

He gave chase and crossed the line just behind Beloki, clocking the same time. His advantage of 4 minutes and 21 seconds over Beloki was unchanged, and he remained on course for a fourth straight title.

"Les Deux-Alpes, it's not too hard, it's not good for attacking," Armstrong said after the stage, which Colombian rider Santiago Botero won in 5:55:16.

Armstrong was ninth, 6:41 off the pace.

The mountain stage from Vaison-la-Romaine in the southern Provence region to this ski station was the first in the Alps this year. But it wasn't as difficult as the two earlier legs in the Pyrenees–both of which Armstrong won –or the trek to the top of the Mont Ventoux, in which he extended his lead.

It was also much easier than Wednesday's stretch from Les Deux-Alpes to La Plagne, which features three exceptionally difficult climbs.

Armstrong prefers to be aggressive and attack in the harder stages, in which rivals are less likely to match his pace. At the Plateau de Beille in the Pyrenees and on the Ventoux, the U.S. Postal Service rider left Beloki stranded as he sprinted to the summit.

The ride to La Plagne takes Armstrong over the Col de la Madeleine mountain pass, which he tackled last year in one of his biggest stage wins. Memorably, he grimaced in apparent pain during that climb, then sprinted up the last stretch to L'Alpe d'Huez. He later acknowledged he had bluffed his rivals into thinking he was in difficulty.

Home runs as b'day presents

BOSTON—Nomar Garciaparra found a unique way to celebrate his 29th birthday: with three home runs in one game.

Garciaparra connected three times — giving him a record-tying five home runs in two games —and had eight RBIs to lead the Boston Red Sox over the Tampa Bay Devil Rays 22-4 Tuesday in the opener of a day-night doubleheader.

The Devil Rays salvaged the day by rallying for five runs in the ninth inning and a 5-4 victory. Jared Sandberg hit a three-run homer off Ugueth Urbina (0-6) to spoil a strong outing by Boston starter Derek Lowe.

Victor Zambrano (4-4) got the victory. Esteban Yan finished for his 13th save, giving up a two-out single to Garciaparra before striking out Manny Ramirez with two on.

Ramirez, who homered twice in the first game, went 1-for-5 with four strikeouts in Game 2 as the Red Sox wasted a great chance to gain 1 ½ games on the first-place Yankees in the AL East.

But it was Garciaparra's performance in the opener that highlighted the day.

"You don't see days like this coming," Garciaparra said after the opener. "You never say, 'I feel good. I'm going to hit three.'"

Garciaparra, 29, became the first major leaguer to have a three home-run game on his birthday, according to the Elias Sports Bureau, baseball's statistician.

BASEBALL RESULTS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

Boston 22, Tampa Bay 4; Seattle 4, Texas 1; Oakland 2, Anaheim 1; Chicago 8, Minnesota 7; Detroit 10, Kansas City 1; Toronto and Baltimore rained out; Indians 9, Yankees 3; Mariners 4, Rangers 1; Athletics 2, Angels 1; White Sox 8, Twins 7; Tigers 10, Royals 1.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Cardinals 4, Giants 0; Cincinnati 7, Pittsburgh 2; Atlanta 5, Florida 3; New York 4, Montreal 3; Houston 7, Milwaukee 4; Philadelphia 7, Chicago 4; Arizona 8, Colorado 5; and Los Angeles 8, San Diego 6; Reds 7, Pirates 2; Braves 5, Marlins 3; Mets 4, Expos 3; Astros 7, Brewers 4; Diamondbacks 8, Rockies 5; Dodgers 8, Padres 6. *AP*

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1990, the Philippines, represented by Magnolia, beat Andersen Bombers, 89-87, to retain the Guam Friendship International Basketball title at the University of Guam Fieldhouse. Also today in 1991, Triple V defeated Crispa, 85-83, to win the PBL Challenge Cup crown at the Loyola Center

Prince Ahmed's cousin killed en route to funeral

AHMED

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — A Saudi prince was killed in a car accident Tuesday while driving to the funeral of his cousin, Ahmed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, the owner of Kentucky Derby winner War Emblem.

Prince Sultan bin Faisal bin Turki bin Abdullah, a 41-year-old businessman, was killed near Riyadh, according to security officials and a statement from the Saudi royal family.

Prince Ahmed died of a heart attack Monday at age 43, shocking the thoroughbred racing world.

Joint funeral prayers were held for both princes at the Imam Turki bin Abdullah mosque, the kingdom's largest. Ahmed and Sultan were buried side by side at Oudh cemetery in the capital.

Sultan's mother and Ahmed's father are siblings of King Fahd.

OCEANPORT, New Jersey — Kentucky Derby and Preakness winner War Emblem won't run in next week's $1-million Haskell Invitational at Monmouth Park because of the death of his owner. Robert Kulina, the vice president and general manager of thoroughbred racing for the track, was told by trainer Bob Baffert on Tuesday that War Emblem would likely skip the race Aug. 4.

The accident happened before dawn as Sultan was driving from the western Saudi town of Taif to Riyadh, according to a family friend.

The high speed of the prince's car likely caused the accident, which involved another vehicle, according to security officials who spoke on the customary condition of anonymity.

Sultan, an ex-military pilot who owned the Lu'lu health care-related business, died after arriving at King Faisal Specialist Hospital in Riyadh, where his cousin died Monday.

Thousands of people lined Riyadh streets to watch the motorcade, led by the two ambulances carrying the princes' bodies followed by a stream of black Mercedes with relatives.

The brief and modest funeral service was attended by members of the royal family, including Ahmed's father, Riyadh Gov. Prince Salman, who returned from Geneva on Monday night after hearing of his son's death.

"I could not control my tears when the body was lowered into the ground," said Salah al-Hammadi, editor-in-chief of Saudi Arabia's Premier Sports daily newspaper Arryadiah. *AP*

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

PAINFUL HOMECOMING

Francisco "Django" Bustamante tries to hold off tears as he finally takes a glimpse on the remains of his 8-month-old daughter Marielle at the Rizal Funeral Homes in Pasay City Tuesday night. Bustamante headed straight to the wake from the airport upon his arrival from Cardiff, Wales, where he placed second in the 2002 World Pool Championship.

People's champion

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

"I AM proud of what he did."

Those were the first words that greeted Francisco "Django" Bustamante upon his arrival on Monday from Cardiff, Wales.

Putch Puyat, the billiards philanthropist, could not have said it any better. Putch, scion of the wealthy Puyat clan, has spent a fortune sending Filipino cue artists like Bata Reyes and Django abroad—receiving not a single centavo from the huge winnings of his wards. Talk of genuine sports patrons hereabouts and you have Putch leading the pack.

What Django did—continue playing in the World Pool Championship despite the death of his only daughter (8-month-old Marielle) to a viral blood infection—was courageous enough. Just imagine the nights Django had to grapple with during the precious breaks of the grueling tournament. Did he ever get to sleep a wink while plodding his way to the finals, a troubled mind and all?

A medal of valor wouldn't be enough to honor Django's extraordinary feat crafted from the depths of a pained heart in Cardiff.

But what Django achieved despite the grief gnawing him every step of the way was something more prestigious than an Asian Games gold medal. The second-place finish was worth the crown already. World champion—he was already that even before Django crashed into the championship showdown on Monday.

Earl Strickland, the brash American, had won the title, 17-15. But it came only after he got the break of a scratch that befell Django when the Filipino was up, 15-13.

As if by design, Strickland always seemed to benefit from Django's unforced errors. Seemingly, even the pool gods wanted Django not to win the crown. Seemingly, it was enough that Django won hearts; the crown becomes but secondary and is fit only for the covetous. And, in this case, Strickland, whose cockiness is sometimes without basis and therefore senselessly annoying.

Thus, to the world's pool fans, Strickland's victory was bereft of luster, empty of dignity as in a politician changing parties faster than the wink of an eye. For, while Strickland will go to the record books as the 2002 World Pool champion, Django will be remembered as the 2002 World Pool champion minus the trophy.

In short, Strickland was the paper champion in Cardiff and Django the people's champion of the world.

Strickland's trophy was but a piece of metal, Django's was of priceless stuff: hearts.

Not even an Olympic champion can top that.

Asiad T. Force 'grabs' cyclists

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE ASIAN Games Task Force has taken charge of the preparation and training of six national cyclists bound for the Busan Asian Games, an offshoot of the unending leadership dispute bugging the Philippine Amateur Cycling Association.

PSC official Ariel Paredes, a member of the Task Force, confirmed yesterday that the joint PSC and Philippine Olympic Committee body will supervise at least three road racers and three mountain bikers who recently qualified to join Team Philippines in Busan.

This developed after former Paca president Ponciano Regalado was ousted by the board following allegations that he had mishandled Paca funds.

Although Paca executive vice president Loloy Cruz assumed the Paca presidency, the PSC still can't channel its support to the association because Cruz still has to gain the recognition of the POC.

Regalado has since organized a breakaway Philippine Cycling Federation, claiming he has the blessings of the international cycling federation.

Paredes added that PSC chair Eric Buhain had approved the arrangement, citing the urgent need to address the cyclists' training requirements while Paca officials try to resolve their differences.

"He is aware of the situation, especially the call of the cyclists themselves for the Task Force to take charge," said Paredes of the RP cycling team composed of Arnel Quirimit (individual time trial and road race), Victor Espiritu and Elmo Ramos (road race), and mountain bikers Marites Bitbit, Eusebio Quinones and Erick Feliciano.

The road racers made the Asian Games cut after their sterling performances in the Tour de Langkawi in Malaysia early this year.

Dolphins dehorn Stags

Rash of errors kill SSC's comeback efforts

GAMES TOMORROW *(Rizal Memorial Coliseum)*
11:30 a.m.—UPHR vs CSB (jrs/srs)
4 p.m.—Letran vs Mapua (srs/jrs)

By June Navarro

BERNZON Franco's courageous efforts lifted Philippine Christian University to a nerve-wracking 72-69 win over defending champion San Sebastian College yesterday in the 78th NCAA basketball tournament at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

Unnerved at crunchtime, the 6-foot-4 Franco scored his team's last six points, including four freethrows, that sealed the Dolphins' third straight victory in four games.

That put PCU at solo second behind frontrunning College of St. Benilde.

Franco's exploits down the stretch frustrated the Stags, who fumbled in the crucial stages and fell to 2-2 in a standoff with Letran College and Mapua.

"We had a lot of mistakes but those miscues were overshadowed by the lucky breaks that we had in the final minutes," said PCU coach Jimmy Mariano, whose Dolphins also repulsed the Stags in the second round last year.

Paul Reguerra's triple put the Stags ahead, 66-64, but the defending champions fell in a rash of errors that saw playmaker Christian Coronel turn the ball over a couple of times.

Those miscues opened a door of opportunity for the Dolphins, which Franco, Alwin Ilagan, Loreto Soriano and Jojo Roque took advantage of.

Stag Jam Alfad collared a decisive rebound but lost his grip on the ball while Reguerra threw a wild pass to a streaking Coronel that could have worked in favor of the Stags in the last 3.3 seconds.

In between those wasted efforts, Franco calmly sank his attempts from the stripe to the thunderous cheers of the PCU gallery.

Banal vs Banal in Ateneo-FEU clash today

GAMES TODAY
(Rizal Memorial Coliseum)
2 p.m.—UST vs UP
4 p.m.—FEU vs Ateneo

By Dennis U. Eroa

THE BIG men take stellar billing as Ateneo guns for a share of the lead when it tackles Far Eastern University today in the UAAP basketball tournament at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

"This is going to be a battle of big men," said Ateneo coach Joel Banal. "FEU is a tough nut to crack."

Banal, who is going to trade wits with younger brother and FEU coach Koy, said he is confident that Ateneo, one game behind tournament leader De La Salle, will sustain its fiery form against the Tamaraws.

The Ateneo-FEU thriller is set at 4 p.m., after the 2 p.m. tiff between University of Santo Tomas and University of the Philippines. Unbeaten La Salle, which drew a bye, is the solo leader with three wins.

Playing solidly, Ateneo blasted UST, 95-85, last Saturday. FEU dumped UP, 65-52, after getting bamboozled by La Salle, 85-71, on July 14 at the Araneta Coliseum.

FEU, UST, UP and UE are carrying identical 1-1, win-loss records. The Maroons ripped the Warriors, 59-54, at the start of the tournament, but failed to contain the Tamaraws' frontline in their next game.

Enrico Villanueva, known for his double-double performances, and Rich Alvarez, deadlier after developing a mean outside shot, will have their hands full battling FEU's version of the Triple Towers—6-foot-8 Dom Yabut, James Razon and Mark Isip, both standing 6-foot-6.

FEU also boasts of 6-foot-4 Gerard Jones.

Banal versus Banal also means focus on defense.

"Whoever loses will treat the whole family to a sumptuous lunch, that's why this game is really important," said Koy.

Added Koy: "Ateneo has matured a lot and this is going to be an exciting game. My team is slowly but surely playing to its potentials."

CHIEF ENDORSER

NBA superstar Kevin Garnett of the Minnesota Timberwolves is a prime endorser of And 1, one of America's top footwear apparels. The footwear's Spring 2003 collection was unveiled on July 22, with PBA stars Jojo Lastimosa, Rodney Santos, Vince Hizon and Noy Castillo and Ateneo's Rich Alvarez gracing the occasion. For every purchase of P3,000 of And 1 items, the customer will receive a P250 gift certificate from the National Sports Grill located at 3rd Floor, Greenbelt Mall, Ayala Center, Makati.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
THURSDAY, JULY 25, 2002

SPORTS

Editor **Al S. Mendoza** ● *Assistant Editor* **Edwin M. Villanueva**

Ramirez 2nd in number of home runs

SURREY CITY, B.C.—Mandaluyong City's Belen Ramirez placed second in the number of home runs belted in the recent Canada Cup Women's Softball Championships here. Despite her exploits, however, Mandaluyong could only land 15th in the 24-team field after bowing to Florida, 7-5, in a playoff for the right to play for the consolation round trophy.

FOUR DIGIT
Luzon 9 2 6 3
(in exact order)
Vis / Min 5 7 9 2

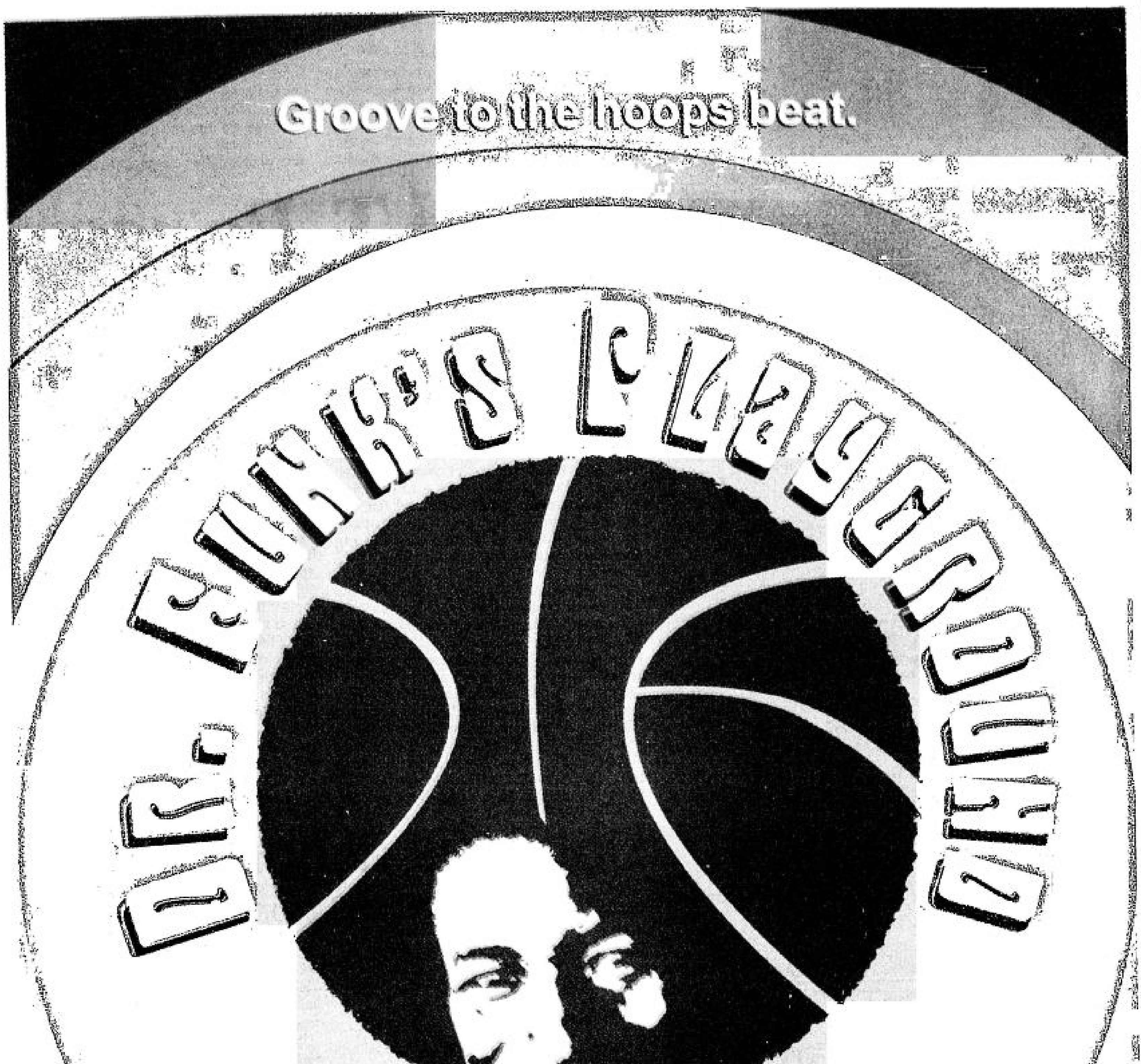
MEGALOTTO 6/45
43 15 34 44 26 4

SUERTRES 4 0 1

▨ **Not everything's easy for Ernie Els** /A18

▨ **Another prince dies on his way to funeral**/A19

▨ **PCU Dolphins win; Ateneo-FEU today**/A19



Do the halfcourt hustle and check out the game during the Disco Era! Groove on down to Nike's Dr. Funk's Playground and feel the hoops vibe during the height of the mirror balls. Sport your coolest Nike gear and get to join fun games such as Drain the Three and In-Vince-a-Ball. You can also meet and greet your fave Nike amateur and professional hoop heroes and catch the Metro Manila Finals of the Nike 3 on 3! It's all coming together July 26 and 27 at the Glorietta Activity Center. So slip on your high tops, slap those high fives and head for Nike's Dr. Funk's Playground!

OLYMPIC VILLAGE
ROBINSONS
SM
TOBY'S

KERBY Raymundo (left) of Purefoods tries to block Alaska's John Arigo in this file photo. Purefoods plays FedEx tonight with a new import, Warren Rosegreen, in tow.

P'foods parades Warren

Standings	W	L		W	L
Red Bull	5	1	Shell	3	3
Coca-Cola	5	2	FedEx	2	3
Sta. Lucia	4	2	Selecta-RP	2	3
Talk N Text	4	3	Ginebra	2	5
Alaska	3	3	Purefoods	1	5
San Miguel	3	3			

GAME TODAY (Caruncho Gym, Pasig City)
7 p.m.—Purefoods vs FedEx

By June Navarro

HOPING to reverse its misfortunes, Governor's Cup titlist Purefoods parades a new import against Federal Express today in the PBA Samsung Commissioner's Cup at the Caruncho Gym in Pasig City.

Warren Rosegreen, a 6-foot-4 forward who honed his skills as a Harlem Globetrotter, is expected to inject life to the TJ Hotdogs' miserable 1-5 start.

Rosegreen, who replaced Gabe Mouneke, played for coach Bill Bayno of Talk N Text during his college days at the University of Las Vegas-Nevada, an NCAA division I school.

Pairing up with former Utah Jazz Chris Morris, Rosegreen will be sized up by the Express' battle-tested imports—Jermaine Walker and Frantz Pierre-Louis—chief architects of FedEx's two wins in the last three games for a 2-3 slate.

Morris debuted with vigor for the Hotdogs as he registered 30 points and 10 rebounds in a losing effort against the Phone Pals, 109-92, more than a week ago.

Today's exactly one month since the Hotdogs experienced the airy feeling of victory, an 83-78 win over the Barangay Ginebra Kings on June 25.

Since then, the Hotdogs have become used to wearing long faces as they fell in a four-game losing skein.

A defeat against the Express would mean kissing their title bid goodbye even if they win their last three matches.

Beating the Hotdogs though would be tough but probabilities point to a FedEx victory as the Express are on the winning track.

The Express drubbed the Selecta-RP team, 94-87, two weeks after they ran over the Shell Turbo Chargers, 93-84.

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A desperate move—Alit

BUREAU of Jail Management and Penology officer-in-charge Arturo Alit yesterday said the latest complaint filed by Senior Supt. Josue Engano before the Civil Service Commission was a "desperate legal move." Engano had alleged that Alit had faked his Officers Senior Executive Course accreditation. Alit said Engano's legal move did not surprise him, adding that the fellow had earlier accused him of faking his educational credentials.

Festival films held at Customs

By Leah Salterio

FIFTEEN foreign films which will be screened in the Cinemanila Film Festival next month have been held by the Bureau of Customs which ordered that the films be taxed as commercial releases.

Cinemanila festival director Tikoy Aguiluz yesterday complained that regular customs duties should not be imposed on the films since they will be shown only during the festival.

"The movies in our lineup will be viewed for only a month at a maximum of two screenings per film," Aguiluz explained. "The films should not be subjected to the same laws and regulations of a commercial film. But the processing time they give is similar to the release of a commercial film that's why it's taking them forever." Aguiluz said he will try to work out a compromise with Customs officials to allow them to pay a bond of 50 percent for the taxes.

He said they cannot finalize the screening schedule for this year's festival until the Bureau of Customs releases the films.

"And even after we can take the films out from Customs, we still don't know how long the MTRCB (Movie and Television Review and Classification Board) can classify the films," Aguiluz said.

The films with the Bureau of Customs include "Central Station" from Brazil, "Mee Pok Man," "Twelve Stories" and "I Not Stupid" from Singapore, and "Ring Trilogy" from Japan.

Aguiluz said foreign producers have also asked their embassies in Manila to mediate for the release of the films from the Bureau of Customs. The embassies, in turn, wrote letters of appeal to the Customs for the release of the film.

"The producers said we're developing culture here but how come those custom officials don't give value to the films," Aguiluz protested. "How can we develop a paying audience if that's the case? Is it a crime to show these films?"

Helpers bludgeon ma, girl to death

Suspects high on drugs

By Christian V. Esguerra

THEY said they had only planned to stage a robbery. But, being high on drugs, the suspects ended up killing the victims.

A businesswoman and her 8-year-old daughter were hammered to death by their two drug-crazed helpers who robbed them in Parañaque City early yesterday morning.

Police found the bloodied bodies of Marilou Vasquez, 48, and her daughter Bea Marie in the master bedroom of their bungalow in Molave Park in Barangay Moonwalk at around 2 a.m.

Suspects Michael Andrade, 20, and Dominique Lingayo, 19, bludgeoned Vasquez and her daughter to death with a hammer.

They next left the house with the victims' cash and valuables, according to the report by SPO1 Alberto Parena.

Initial investigation by the Southern Police District Scene of the Crime Operatives (SPD-SOCO) showed that the victims were clubbed to death in their sleep.

Andrade and Lingayo had been working as drivers for Vasquez's seafood business for a year prior to the incident.

The savagery they committed belied the claim by the suspects that they had not intended to kill the victims.

After having hammered mother and daughter to death, one of the suspects took a fan knife and repeatedly stabbed Vasquez in the neck and head, said Senior Insp. Emma Delelis, chief of the SPD-SOCO.

Andrade, who was later arrested, admitted that he and his companion were high on drugs when they robbed and killed the victims.

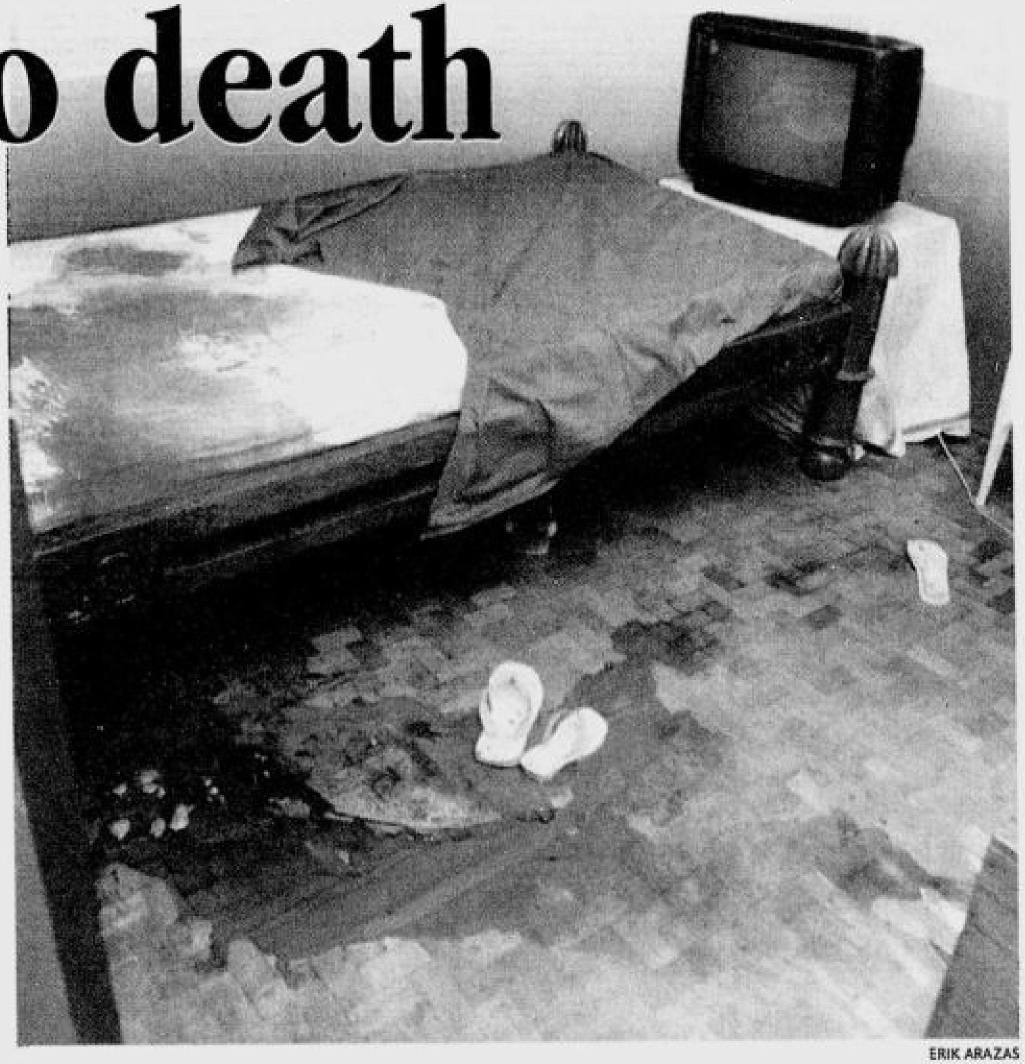
"He said they did not intend to kill the victims. They were just drug-crazed," Delelis said.

Andrade also admitted that he and Lingayo planned the robbery at around 10 a.m. Tuesday after they got word that the businesswoman was keeping a huge amount in her house, Delelis said.

Andrade could have escaped but a security guard alerted his companions as the suspects were about to leave the victim's house, police said.

Village watchers caught up with Andrade but Lingayo, his companion, escaped.

Recovered from Andrade were P3,310 cash, a mobile phone, a fan knife and two other bladed weapons, other valuables and a blood-stained hammer.



ERIK ARAZAS

VICTIMS' blood splattered in crime scene defines savagery in the twin murders.

GMA upholds Parsons

By Carlito Pablo and Nelson Flores

SONNY Parsons will remain a free man.

President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said she has ordered presidential legal counsel Avelino Cruz to check with government prosecutors and find out if they have already filed in court homicide charges against Parsons for killing two armed robbers who broke into his house in Marikina City on July 18.

The President said if the charges filed by the Marikina police are still pending with the fiscal's office, the prosecutors have orders "not to proceed with it."

"We checked the facts," Ms Macapagal said. "He was just defending himself and his family."

She noted that the complaint filed by the police is simply a "pro forma case."

First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo defended Parsons over the weekend, while the President then withheld official comment over the incident.

"Intuitively, he (Arroyo) thought it was the right thing to do," said Ms Macapagal, who explained that she had to review the facts first. "The facts are as what Sonny Parsons himself related."

President Macapagal said Parsons' decision to pursue and engage the robbers in a shootout was justified.

"This is not vigilantism," the President said.

Parsons said the shootout had changed their lives. He said he and his family are now having nightmares and have become a little paranoid.

Parsons' 43-year-old wife, Sol, said she has difficulty sleeping at night. She added her children are now waking up late at night sweating. She said one daughter had decided to leave the house to settle elsewhere.

She added she and her children are now thinking of relocating, but her husband is adamant that they stay.

Parsons' spirited defense of his family earned him praise from many quarters and highlighted the sorry state of peace and order in Marikina City.

The former actor earlier expressed fears that the surviving members of the robbery gang that he encountered last week are determined to kill him to avenge the death of the two men.

Parsons said he has received reports that powerful individuals are protecting the gang. He added that even if the Philippine National Police has increased security for his family, gang members continue to monitor the movements of members of his household, citing the recent attempt of unidentified men to abduct his maid.

ARROYO

PARSONS

Don't trust your trash

THINK twice before you throw your trash away.

Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando yesterday warned litterbugs against throwing their garbage anywhere, especially in the waterways.

"There is already a law prescribing imprisonment for those who throw their trash anywhere. We might have to utilize that law, considering that garbage is one of the biggest causes of floods," he said, adding that the MMDA would also closely monitor those living near creeks and rivers.

Fernando, who is celebrating his 56th birthday today, visited the Tripa de Gallina pumping station on Don Carlos St. in Pasay.

Leila Salaverria

Who should replace Desierto?

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

TWO camps, both equally influential with President Macapagal-Arroyo, are tightly jockeying to have their protegés appointed to replace Ombudsman Aniano Desierto who retires on Aug. 4.

The two camps are those of Justice Secretary Hernando Perez and newly appointed Supreme Court Justice Antonio Carpio. Perez is rooting for his fellow Batangueño and subordinate, Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño. Carpio is batting for Solicitor General Simeon Marcelo.

There are other personalities being considered for the very powerful judicial post, which is lower than a Supreme Court justice and higher than a Court of Appeals justice. But Zuño and Marcelo are close contenders.

***

Marcelo was an associate of Carpio's at the Villaraza, Carpio and Associates law office. The law office was the No. 1 legal adviser of then President Fidel V. Ramos.

Zuño has been in the government prosecution service since he passed the bar exams in the early 1970s.

Who is the better candidate for Ombudsman between the two?

***

Both Marcelo and Zuño are veteran, dyed-in-the-wool lawyers.

They have carved their niche in many courtroom battles—Zuño as a long-time government prosecutor, and Marcelo as a member of one of the country's topnotch law firms.

All things being equal, the weight tilts more heavily in favor of Zuño than for Marcelo.

***

The job of the Ombudsman is prosecuting graft cases filed with the Sandiganbayan.

Marcelo's job is defending government interests in court; that of Zuño is prosecuting the accused in court where the complainants are the People of the Philippines. So, the job of the Ombudsman is right down Zuño's alley.

There is also one big reason why Marcelo should not get the job. The Carpio camp has practically exhausted favors coming from the President. Pancho Villaraza, Carpio's former senior partner, belongs to Macapagal-Arroyo's "kitchen cabinet." Carpio was recently appointed to the high tribunal. Marcelo is solicitor-general. Avelino Cruz, another partner at the Villaraza-Carpio law office, is presidential legal counsel.

***Pagbigyan naman n'yo ang iba.* You don't have a monopoly of talent.**

***

Rep. Aniceto Saludo of Southern Leyte should stop using his exalted position in harassing Antonio Reyes, publisher of Southern Leyte Times.

The congressman, Reyes claims, is behind a libel case filed against him by a councilor of the capital Maasin. The libel case, Reyes says, stemmed from a blind item published by his newspaper about an unnamed councilor trying to extort money from a telephone company.

Although the concerned councilor was not identified, the case nevertheless prospered at the office of Provincial Prosecutor Antonio Ruiz. Ruiz filed the case with the sala of Regional Trial Court Judge Romeo Gomez. The judge reportedly got his position through Saludo's recommendation.

***

Not content with the filing of the libel case against Reyes, the congressman reportedly prodded the judge to issue a hold-departure order against the small-town publisher. This means Reyes can't leave the country while the case is pending in court.

(Numerous libel cases have been filed against this writer, but no hold-departure order has been issued against me. Libel is not a heinous crime. It's a job-connected offense, if it can be considered a crime at all. There are pending bills in Congress seeking to make libel a civil rather than a criminal offense).

There is only one reason, Reyes says, why Saludo is bent on sending him to jail. The "Times" is a rival of the Maasin Mail, of which Saludo is reportedly one of the financiers.

You don't play fair, Mr. Congressman!

***

If memory serves, Saludo was one of the congressmen linked to the "Gang of Five" which allegedly shook down big business establishments in exchange for escaping investigation by a powerful congressional committee. The congressmen linked to the Gang of Five are all members of that committee.

Saludo tried but failed to have a Manila female journalist jailed for writing about his and his cohorts' extortion activities.

That's how notorious he is. Instead of Saludo, Spanish for "salute," the guy's name should have been Boo.

***

Another guy in Leyte who bullies lesser mortals because of his high position is not a politician but a police officer—Chief Supt. Nardito Yoro. He is the PNP regional director in Eastern Visayas.

Yoro allegedly threatened with bodily harm Fidel Banzon, columnist of the Leyte Samar Daily Express after the journalist criticized the general's order transferring a subordinate from his post.

Yoro's threat against Banzon has not gone unnoticed. The columnist's colleagues in Eastern Visayas are asking for the general's relief.

Linda Montayre, et al charged

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE MANILA Police filed criminal charges yesterday against Philippine Consultative Assembly leader Linda Montayre and several other civil society members for the violence that erupted during the dispersal of protesters near Malacañang Palace on Monday night.

Charges of serious physical injury, direct assault, and illegal assembly were filed against Montayre, Nash Pangadapun, secretary general of the Muslim civil society group Maradeka, and several John and Jane Does, said Supt. Marcelino Pedrozo Jr., head of the Western Police District-General Assignment Section.

Senior Supt. Rafael Corpuz of the WPD-District Headquarters Support Unit was injured during the dispersal after PCA protestors threw a piece of concrete block that hit his face.

The policeman is allegedly in danger of losing his right eyesight.

Pedrozo said Montayre and Pangadapun were charged since they were the leaders of the protesters.

He said there were also Maradeka members present during the protest action.

The dispersal happened at around 8:50 p.m. at the corner of A.H. Lacson and Alcantara streets in Sampaloc.

"We dispersed them because they wanted to hold a vigil but they did not have a permit," said Supt. Manolo Martinez, Ermita police station, who was also at the scene.

Some of the PCA protesters had voluntarily dispersed after three fire trucks and anti-riot policemen with gas masks arrived when violence erupted.

Corpuz was giving instructions to his men when a piece of a concrete block was thrown at him from the direction of the protesters at Alcantara Street.

UP frat fellowship

THE ALPHA Phi Beta Fraternity of the UP College of Law is holding its monthly alumni fellowship tomorrow at the Club Filipino at 6:30 p.m. The July event is sponsored by the UP Law Class '80 alumni brods. For inquiries, please contact Brod Sim Buyco at tels.. 888-0999 or 888-1007.

WAZZZZUP?
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4 ALL ABOUT BENJAMIN

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5 MONSTER BALL

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3 SELDA

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3 MONSTER BALL
4 A WALK TO REMEMBER

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9 MINORITY REPORT
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11 SUGAT
12 HANGGANG KAILAN . . .

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6 CROSSROADS
7 MINORITY REPORT
8 MEN IN BLACK II

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2 CLOSED
3 A WALK TO REMEMBER
4 LIFE OR SOMETHING . . .
5 KAPALIT
6 MEN IN BLACK II
7 CLOSED
8 AMELIE

SM CITY PAMPANGA

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1 MEN IN BLACK II
2 ALL ABOUT BENJAMIN
3 BIG FAT LIAR
4 CASS & CARY
5 KATAWAN MO . . .
6 HIGH CRIMES

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3 DOG SOLDIERS
4 KAPALIT

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2 HANGGANG KAILAN . . .
3 MEGIDDO
4 DOG SOLDIERS

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2 KAPALIT
3 BIG FAT LIAR
4 JUST VISITING
5 LIFE OR SOMETHING . . .
6 MEN IN BLACK 2

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2 *4 NEW*
3 *STATE-OF-THE-ART*
VISION & SOUND
4

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2 *4 NEW*
3 *STATE-OF-THE-ART*
VISION & SOUND
4

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4 KAPALIT
5 JUST VISITING
6 AMELIE

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When stars . . .

From page A24

lenging format for me.

Richard Gomez: Letting go of "Palibhasa Lalake," for example, was painful but it was a decision that everyone mutually agreed on. The cast decided to call it quits for different reasons. Some wanted salary increases while others were getting tired and bored with doing the same routine for 12 years. But the upside of it was that we had all that time to enjoy each other's company. We carved some of our deepest friendships in that show and we saw each other through ups and downs.

On the other hand, it was more than painful when management canceled "Your Honor." It was disappointing and frustrating because I was proud of that show. Everyone worked hard for it.

To say the very least, it is always sad to lose a show. To say otherwise would be hypocrisy. But you have to rise above the situation, accept it and move on.

Judy Ann Santos: If ever? Naturally, I'll feel bad not only for myself but for the staff and crew as well. But that's how it really is in show biz. You just have to learn to let go and look forward to the next chapter in your career. Maybe it's time to turn over the airtime to new artists who have potentials, too.

I believe there's a purpose for everything that happens. We just have to be patient and wait.

Janice de Belen: It's only normal that one would feel bad, especially if the show lasted a long time, but it's bound to happen so we just have to learn how to deal with it.

Zoren Legazpi: Sometimes, I tend to take it personally because I've gotten close to my co-stars already. But if you think you've got talent, there's nothing to worry about because there will surely be more projects lined up for you.

For feedback, e-mail friends_at_dsquare@yahoo.com

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ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	SORORITY BOYS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	DOG SOLDIERS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	MINORITY REPORT
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	HIGH CRIMES
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	HANGGANG KAILAN AKO PAPATAY
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	MEN IN BLACK 2
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MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
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ODEON	MEGIDDO
ODEON-2	KILABOT AT KEMBOT / WE WERE SOLDIER
ROBEN	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO / DEVILS MASK
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
REMAR	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
REMAR-2	SUGAT
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	HANGGANG KAILAN AKO PAPATAY
B	
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	POWER PUFF GIRLS
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	SELDA
CINEMA-2	KAPALIT
CINEMA-3	HANGGANG KAILAN AKO PAPATAY
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	THIRD WHEEL
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	POWERPUFF GIRLS
CINEMA-6	HIYAS SA PARAISO
CINEMA-7	CASS & CARY
CINEMA-8	FOREVERMORE
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	MEN IN BLACK 2
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MEGIDDO
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	SORORITY BOYS
CINEMA-12	DOG SOLDIERS
CINEMA-14	MEN IN BLACK 2
CINEMA-15	MINORITY REPORT
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	THIRD WHEEL
CINEMA-2	SORORITY BOYS
CINEMA-3	MEN IN BLACK 2
CINEMA-4	MEGIDDO
CINEMA-5	DOG SOLDIER
CINEMA-6	MEN IN BLACK 2
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PINAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	[illegible]

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MANILA BULLETIN

MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)
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ArtFilm Greenbelt 1

INDIA

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A RETROSPECTIVE OF GURU DUTT

Mr. And Mrs. 55 (1955) *July 27 - 12:30 PM, 3:30 PM / July 30 - 6:30 PM, 9:30 PM*
Staring: Guru Dutt, Madhubala, Lalita Pawar, Johnny Walker, Yasmin, Kumkuin
(Romantic Comedy)
With a huge inheritance and independence at stake, a shotgun wedding followed by a quick divorce seems a bright idea. But for Preetam and Anita, it will not be easy when love and an ulta-feminist aunt get in the way of their journey on the wiry and wacky road to happiness. Guru Dutt takes on this sophisticated romantic comedy with intelligence. Using smart and quick dialogue instead of the usual slapstick, he influenced the future of Bollywood comedies.
MTRCB Rating: GENERAL PATRONAGE (G)

Kaagaz ke Phool (1959) *July 28 - 6:30 PM, 9:30 PM / July 30 - 12:30 PM, 3:30 PM*
Staring: Guru Dutt, Waheeda Rehman, Johnny Walker, Veena, Baby Naaz
Considered Guru Dutt's cinematic masterpiece, it tells the tale of a famous film director who discovers a stranger one rainy night and turns her into a movie star. Estranged from his wife and daughter, he eventually falls in love with her. But as their relationship grows deeper, it also becomes the butt of gossip and other complications. They will have to choose between what they feel and what is right in order to survive. Even Guru Dutt's harshest critics agree that this film is nothing short of brilliant.
MTRCB Rating: To be determined

Baazi (1951) *July 26 - 6:30 PM, 9:30 PM / July 28 - 12:30 PM, 3:30 PM / July 28 - 12:30 PM, 3:30 PM*
Staring: Dev Anand, Geeta Bali, Kalpana kartik, K.N. Singh, K. Dhawan
Small town gambler Madan is driven into a life of crime to pay for his sister's mounting medical expenses. But when he decides to retire from organized crime, he brings with him the wrath of the underworld. Now Madan must try to survive before redemption becomes too late. This film noir marks Guru Dutt's directorial debut, remarkably setting the tone for Bollywood's urban crime films in the 1950s and early 1960s.
MTRCB Rating: PARENTAL GUIDANCE 13 (PG-13)

Aar Paar (1954) *July 26 - 12:30 PM, 3:30 PM / July 29 - 6:30 PM, 9:30 PM*
Staring: Guru Dutt, Shyama, Shakila, Johnny Walker
A taxi-driver and ex-convict struggles for reform in a world of social intolerance. He takes to the streets in hopes of employment when a chance encounter with a young lady lands him not only a job but also her heart. Shackled by the chains of social prejudice, he fights to find the good in himself and in so doing, find society's acceptance. Guru Dutt comes full circle with this film as it stands out as among the best of the crime thriller genre.
MTRCB Rating: GENERAL PATRONAGE (G)

Pyaasa (1957) *July 27 - 6:30 PM, 9:30 PM / July 29 - 12:30 PM, 3:30 PM*
Staring: Guru Dutt, Mala Sinha, Waheeda Rehman, Rehman, Johnny Walker
With one rejection after another, Vijay bottoms out as an unsuccessful poet. Constantly criticized by his brothers and peers, he takes to the streets in search of purpose. Bruised but not beaten, he goes in search of love, recognition and spiritual fulfillment, capping his life in pursuit of answers. Was his genius for verse a gift or a curse? Recognized by fans and critics as Guru Dutt's real masterpiece, this film bears his stamp of acting and directorial excellence.
MTRCB Rating: To be determined

AYALA CINEMAS

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Schedules are subject to change without prior notice.

AYALA CINEMAS NOW SHOWING

G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 MEN IN BLACK 2	1 MEGIDDO	1 THE YIN-YANG MASTER	1 SORORITY BOYS 12:25, 2:35, 4:45, 6:55, 9:05, 11:15	1 MEN IN BLACK 2
2 SORORITY BOYS	2 MINORITY REPORT	2 MEN IN BLACK 2	2 MEN IN BLACK 2 11:20, 1:20, 3:20, 5:20, 7:20, 9:20, 11:20	2 MEN IN BLACK 2
3 MEGIDDO	3 MEN IN BLACK 2 11:40, 1:50, 4:00, 6:10, 8:20, 10:30	3 HOTDOG & BOYFRIENDS JULY 26 & 27 8 PM	3 MEGIDDO 10:50, 1:20, 3:50, 6:20, 8:50, 11:20	3 SORORITY BOYS
4 DOG SOLDIERS	4 LIFE OR SOMETHING		4 AMELIE 1:00, 3:35, 6:10, 8:45, 11:20	4 MEGIDDO
	5 HIGH CRIMES		5 THIRD WHEEL 11:20, 1:20, 3:20, 5:20, 7:20, 9:20, 11:20	5 THE THIRD WHEEL
	6 SORORITY BOYS			
	7 THIRD WHEEL			

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THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

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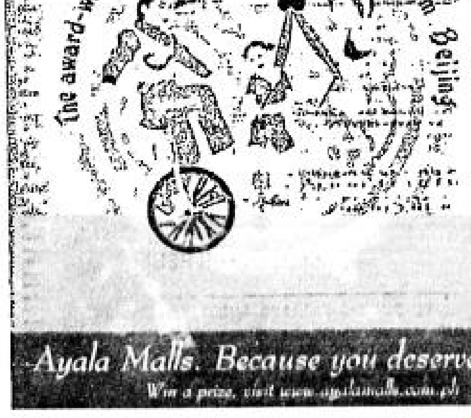
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Glorietta Activity Center

ALABANG
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Activity Center

CEBU
August 16
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August 17 & 18
11:30am, 3pm and 6pm
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P 13

CINEMA 2 MEGIDDO
11:40, 1:55, 4:10, 6:25, 8:45
P 13

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July 26 & 27 2002	FALSETTOS	(New Voice Company)	8:30 PM

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Editor **Louie C. Camino**

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Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

THIRD WHEEL - P 13 12:00, 2:00, 4:00, 5:55, 7:50, 9:45	**SORORITY BOYS - R 18** 1:30, 3:35, 5:40, 7:45, 9:50	**MEN IN BLACK 2 - P 13** 1:10, 3:10, 5:10, 7:10, 9:10
MEGIDDO - P13 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00	**DOG SOLDIER - R 18** 12:50, 3:10, 5:30, 7:50, 10:10	**MENI IN BLACK 2 - P 13** 12:10, 2:10, 4:10, 6:10, 8:10, 10:10

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Interesting modifications

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE new seasons of "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire" and "The Weakest Link" present us with interesting modifications in the hosting styles of quizmasters **Christopher de Leon** and **Edu Manzano**, respectively.

Ever since "Millionaire" started telecasting, we've been urging Christopher to stop grandstanding and being so "colorful" and "helpful" on the show, and just stick to asking those questions as briskly as possible. Well, on the new edition of the quiz program, he's finally doing that, and the show is the better for it.

For his part, Edu is generally still his cantankerous, impossible-to-please old self, but he's perceptibly thawing off in some instances, especially when he has to zap female contestants with his signature cold-as-ice "Goodbye!" These days, when he consigns female contestants to quiz-show Siberia, Edu looks them in the eye and softens the death sentence with a sad smile.

But the biggest possible change is the report that Edu may be leaving the show, to be replaced by a comedian. When we first heard about this at home, there was general consternation because Edu is our family's favorite (we just love his Darth Vader impersonation).

We trust that the rumor isn't true, because "The Weakest Link" won't be the same without Edu. But, if the change of hosts is inevitable, the replacement shouldn't be a comedian!

One of the unique aspects of "The Weakest Link" is the palpable feeling of terror that permeates the show, as the contestants quiver in their shoes due to the tension, the occasionally difficult questions, and the harassment they keep getting from the snooty quizmaster.

If the new quizmaster is a comedian, he'd be funny or ingratiating, and that all-important stress factor would dissipate. From "The Weakest Link" to "The Tweakest Wink?" It simply won't wash.

Our last word on Edu: If he does put an end to his fabulous quizmastering career for the nonce, we hope that another channel will remember that he's also one of the best talk show hosts we have, and give him a new program along that line to go to town with.

'Windtalkers'

JOHN Woo's latest film, "Windtalkers," is set during the Battle of Saipan in World War Two. Marines Joe Enders (**Nicolas Cage**) and Ox Anderson (**Christian Slater**) are assigned to protect code talkers Ben Yahzee (**Adam Beach**) and Charlie Whitehorse (**Roger Willie**).

Their orders are to keep the men safe, but if a code talker should fall into enemy hands, they're to "protect the code at all costs."

As the men become reluctant friends and the bonds of war are forged, each man is ultimately faced with a terrible decision.

The code talkers became essential to the American war effort in World War Two, because the Japanese were continually able to break encrypted military transmissions, dramatically slowing down the US military's progress. Finally, in 1942, several hundred Navajo Americans were recruited as Marines and trained to use a secret military code based on their native language.

Their code was ultimately the only one never broken by the Japanese, and is considered to have been a key factor in winning the war.

When stars lose a TV show

DOLLYWOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

THERE have been major changes in TV programming.

Time has come for some shows to give way to different kinds of shows. They are really not out to replace the old one because there's always room for everyone.

It's almost like a part of you dies when you lose a show. I should know because I've gone through that phase several times over in different networks.

But the loss isn't an irreparable one. What's the point in wallowing in self-pity? No one is indispensable in show biz, and in any business for that matter. It can be such an ungrateful job sometimes but you should love it enough to stay on course.

I cornered some celebrities and asked them their sentiments about the inevitable loss of a show.

Korina Sanchez: I get upset if somebody asks to kick me out. But if it's my fault, fine. No need to give myself a hard time. If it's really meant for you, *para sa 'yo talaga*. There are just some things beyond our control.

Martin Nievera: If I lose a show, I consider it a production casualty and I never take it personally.

Everything happens for a reason. I didn't lose a show, I gained a day-off! There will be more shows for as long as there is a song to sing, I'll be there!

Ces Drilon: The first time I lost a show was when we ended "Usapang Business" after three years on the air. I admit I was quite emotional about it, the show having been the product of my blood, sweat and tears. But my team and I beat the network executives to the axe and presented a new format which is what you now watch as "Pipol."

I remember presenting the new format in a planning session and my opening statement was, "No more tears."

Today I can humbly say that "Pipol" is very successful. Its format is a very distinctive one on Philippine television.

The second time I lost a show was when "The World Tonight" was axed. I was the business anchor then. I admit at first it is a blow to your self-confidence but then in this business, if you don't believe in yourself, who will?

Last year I "lost" in the race to anchor the late night news but then, not getting it gave me the opportunity to host "Pointblank" on ANC which is a more stimulating and chal-

WHEN A21

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Options
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BUSINESS

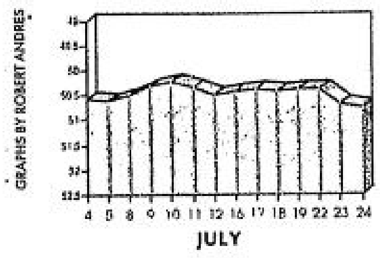
Editor **Raul O. Marcelo** ◆ *Assistant Editor* **Corrie S. Narisma**

UN report says IMF, World Bank, WTO unfair, out of touch
Page B7

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO - DOLLAR



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As of 5 p.m., July 24, 2002

GOLD: $313.20/313.70
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STOCK MARKET

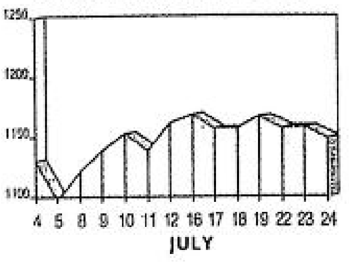
Shares close lower

SHARES, led by telecom giant PLDT, closed lower yesterday as news of a high budget deficit in the first half of the year battered sentiment already depressed by US losses, traders said.

The main index closed 9.02 points or 0.78 percent lower at 1,149.03 points and analysts said they expected the bearish mood to prevail for the rest of the week.

SHARES/ B3

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B5)

Ayala raising funds for ₱5-B QC project

By Elena R. Torrijos

AYALA Land Inc., the property arm of the Ayala family, will borrow P3 billion to develop a P5-billion shopping center at the North Triangle MRT-3 north depot in Quezon City.

ALI vice president and comptroller Jaime Ysmael said the company was in talks with local and foreign banks to raise up to P3 billion by December to finance the project under the Metro Rail Transit Development Corp. The balance of the cost of the project would be funded through equity.

ALI is a member of the MRTDC consortium and will manage the project on behalf of the group.

"The financing is being raised for that project. It's a separate company but ALI is involved in the project. ALI is raising the financing on behalf of the company," Ysmael said.

The ALI executive said that financing should be in place this year so that construction of the project could begin next year.

MRTDC is the company that develops the real estate side of the mass rail transit that runs through Edsa, Metro Manila's main thoroughfare.

ALI has an 18.6-percent stake in Metro Rail Transit Holdings, which owns more than 80 percent of MRTDC.

The commercial project should coincide with the increased passenger traffic expected from the extension of the 16.9-kilometer MRT.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has given the go-ahead for the construction of the 5.12-km extension of the MRT-3.

A Malacañang statement said the $213.99-million rail project, to be financed and carried out by Metro Rail Transit Corp. (MRTC), earlier passed the Investment Coordination Committee (ICC) of the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda).

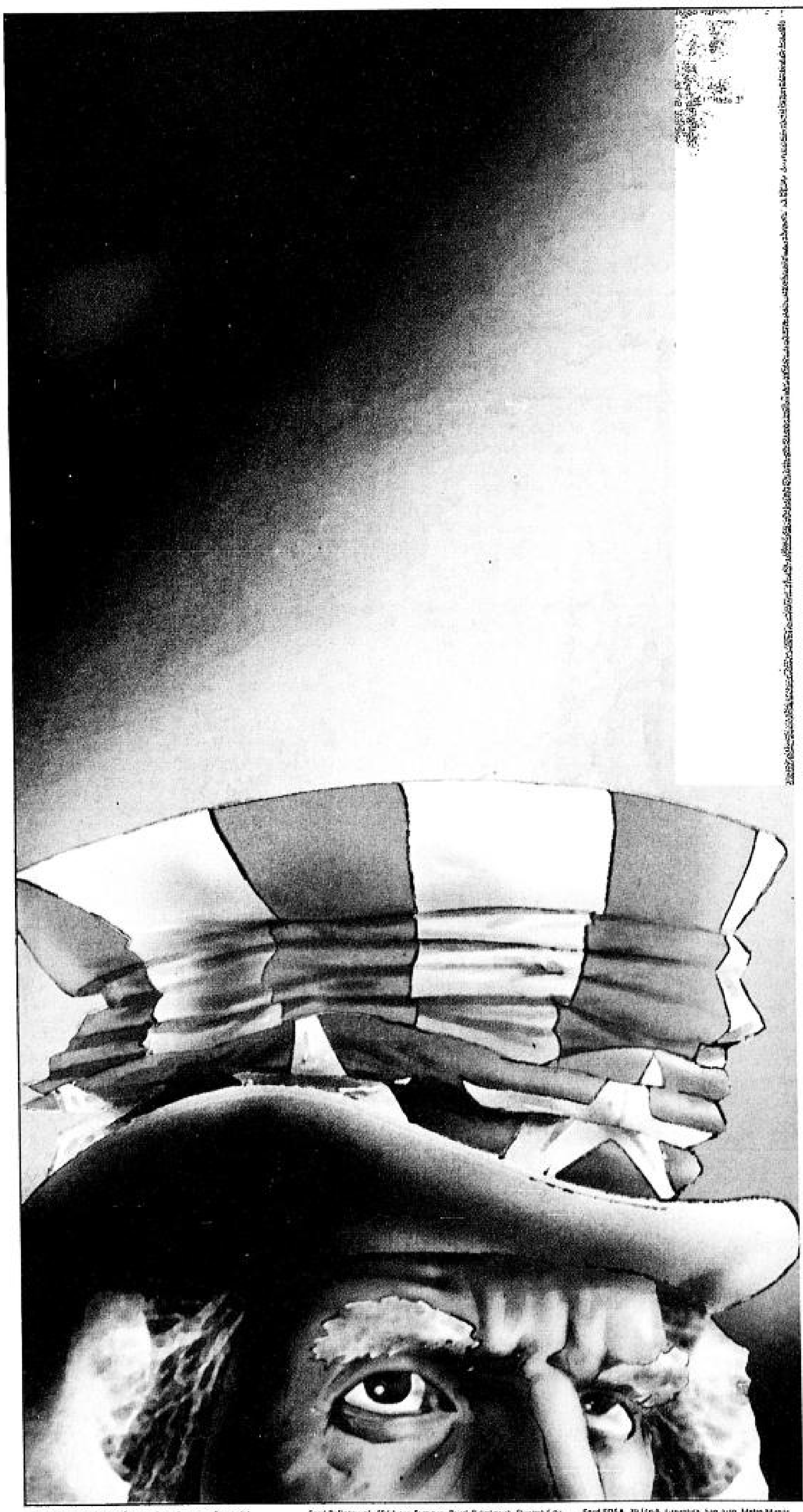
Economic Planning Secretary and ICC co-chair Dante Canlas recommended the approval of the MRT-3 extension project to the President during last Thursday's Cabinet meeting in Malacañang.

The project would complete the rail transit loop by linking the Baclaran-Monumento Light Rail Transit Line 1 and the Taft-North Avenue MRT-3. The interface would come when the MRT-3 extends from its terminal on North Avenue to Monumento, with the construction of three elevated stations at Roosevelt, Balintawak and Monumento, all along Edsa.

The extension project will be implemented under the build-transfer (BT) scheme in accordance with the Build-Operate-Transfer Law.

The project will involve civil works, system designs, a communication system, an automated fare collection system, escalators and elevators, closed-circuit television and others.

The government, under the build-lease-transfer (BLT) contract, operates the MRT-3 which runs 18 hours daily, six hours of which are peak hours. The maximum capacity of a three-car train is about 1,182 passengers or 394 passengers per car.



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NDC property sale draws top developers

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE COUNTRY'S top real estate firms and retailers have expressed keen interest in bidding or negotiating for the P6 billion worth of properties that the National Development Co. wants to liquidate from its portfolio.

A source said NDC's "Property Series 2002"—its first in a series of road shows to market its idle assets—launched Tuesday night was well-attended, which the agency was quick to claim as a good indicator of interest among property buyers.

Among those present were officials of Ayala Land Inc., Robinson Land Corp., Jardine Land Inc., McDonald's franchisee Golden Arches Development Corp., Megaworld Properties and Holdings Inc., Empire East Land Inc., and trader Elena Lim's Solid Corp.

The source said most of these investors were interested in NDC's Goodyear and M-Gas properties in Las Piñas and Paco, Manila, because of their strategic location and size.

The 18-hectare Goodyear property formerly leased by Goodyear Philippines Inc. is located at the Alabang-Zapote Road near the successful shopping mall projects of Ayala Land (Alabang Town Center) and Filinvest Land (Filinvest Festival Mall). The property's price is estimated at P4.5 billion.

The M-Gas property, meanwhile, includes eight parcels of land with a total area of 40,000 square meters at M-Gas' former refilling plant and an adjacent 685-square-meter lot.

NDC general manager Ofelia Bulaong said the NDC property sale should attract strong interest from investors with a sharp eye on finding opportunities amid the lingering property crisis.

Bulaong said the NDC could either hold an auction or a negotiated sale for these assets.

The NDC properties, 25 parcels of land in all, are suitable for a wide array of uses, such as industrial estate and shopping mall development, housing, or gasoline retail.

These properties are in Manila, Quezon City, Isabela, Pampanga, Tarlac, Bataan, Laguna, Cavite, Leyte, Bacolod, Cebu, Davao, Agusan del Sur, Zamboanga and Maguindanao.

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Cebu Pacific reports 51% load along S. Korea route

By Abigail L. Ho

CEBU Pacific Air is posting an average load factor of 51 percent along its Manila-Seoul route, capitalizing on an increase in tourist arrivals from South Korea, according to airline vice president Peggy Vera.

Cebu Pacific started flying four times a week to Seoul in March.

The Civil Aeronautics Board formally awarded the airline with three flight frequencies in December last year. The fourth frequency it is currently flying is an "extra section" or a flight added to current schedules rather than a new one.

Vera said Cebu Pacific was pushing for daily flights to Seoul, so that it could penetrate the market more.

"In the last RP-Korea talks, it was agreed that we will meet again after a review of the traffic demand. Korea just requested, informally, that no talks be scheduled until after the World Cup in June. We are now pushing for a scheduling of talks so that we could obtain rights to fly daily," she said.

She admitted that passenger volume dropped for the duration of the World Cup, as Koreans opted to stay in their country to watch the games. There were also less passengers bound for South Korea as all hotels in that country were fully booked during that time.

But, overall, aviation economist and University of Asia and the Pacific professor Ma. Cherry Lyn Rodolfo said tourist arrivals from South Korea went up 34 percent in the first five months of the year.

"Arrivals from Korea hit 113,956 versus the comparable 2001 figure of 85,050, generating tourist revenue of $64 million," she said.

She said Cebu Pacific's average load factor along the Manila-Seoul route was "a reasonably good performance for a newcomer."

Vera said Cebu Pacific was optimistic that the CAB would rule in the airline's favor and grant it the fourth frequency that South Korea gave the country in April.

Department of Agrarian Reform
Adjudication Board (DARAB)
Annex Bldg., DAR Central Office Cmpd., Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given that decisions/resolutions were promulgated by the Honorable Board in the following cases on the date indicated:

DARAB Case No.	Title	Date Promulgated
3944 (Resolution)	Percelino Binas vs. Benjamin Bautista	January 15, 2001
8019 (Decision)	Manuel Benasa et. al. vs. Apolinario Evangelista et. al.	January 17, 2001
4945 (Decision)	Cynthia Javelosa et. al. vs. Carolina Guardialao	May 18, 1998
6164-6176 (Decision)	Rolem Farriquer vs. DAR, PARO et. al.	January 17, 2001
8515-8518 (Decision)	Mariveles Alas-Asin Old Residence Association vs. Jacinto Irog et. al.	February 7, 2001

Counsels and parties to these cases, particularly the following persons:

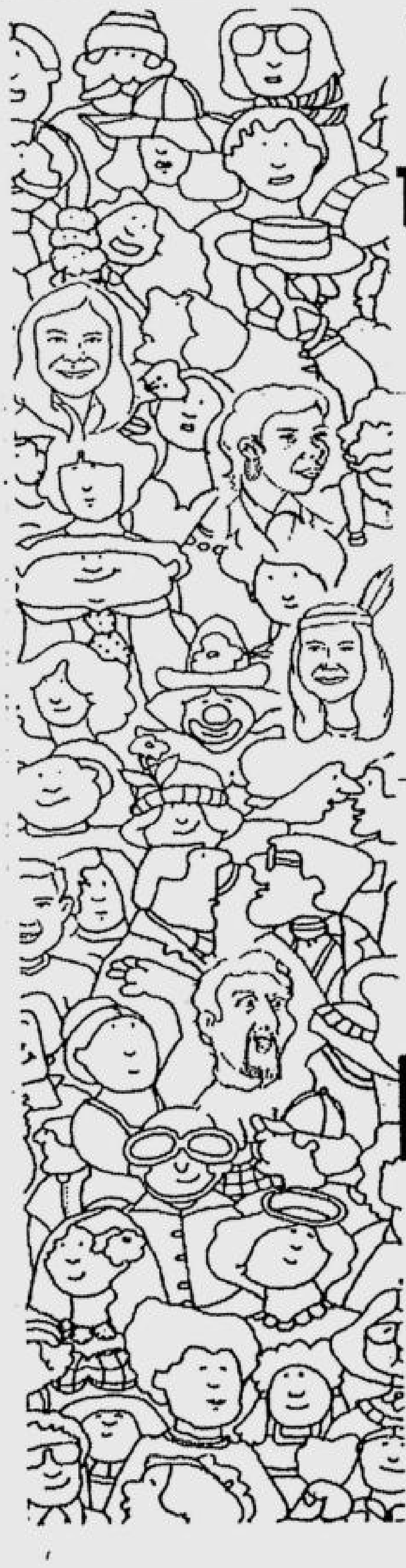
DARAB Case No.	Party/Counsel	Last known Address
3944	Percelino Binas	Hda. Balas Brgy. E. Lopez Silay City, Negros Occidental
8019	Manuel Benasa	Echague, Isabela
4945	Cynthia Javelosa	Arguelles Extension Jaro, Iloilo City
	Atty. Maximo Cartera	Baloy St. Alta Tierra Villa Jaro, Iloilo City
6164-6176	Bernardo Aungon	Tulay, Odiongan, Romblon
8515-8518	Romeo Herrera	Alas-Asin, Mariveles, Bataan
	Lilia Asegurado	Alas-Asin, Mariveles, Bataan

are hereby advised to get a copy of the decision from the DARAB Secretariat, DAR Adjudication Board, Diliman, Quezon City. After the lapse of thirty (30) days from the date of posting on this notice, without any Motion for Reconsideration or Petition for Review being filed an Entry of Judgment shall be made and the decision on these cases shall become final and executory.

July 10, 2002, Diliman, Quezon City

Acting Executive Director
DARAB Secretariat

July 18 & 25, 2002 – Inquirer



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Can you be my tax mate?

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

LET'S say the Bureau of Internal Revenue gets lucky. It sustains the past three months' trend in its tax take. It can save this cute administration from a lot of embarrassment.

I am not saying that just because BIR Commissioner Rene Bañez gave me 12 brand new Expeditions, imported, of course, which most probably were not fully tax-paid.

But I'm just kidding! I cannot accept the Expedition, boss, if you don't pay for the tax. My conscience will bother me if I accept any tax-unpaid . . . well, "bribe"!

That I put the cars in my neighbor's garage shows you they are tax-paid. Hopefully, at long last, I can match up with our beloved Comelec's top officials. Can you be my text mates, sirs and ma'ams?

The officials of Comelec, you see, who had no money to modernize our stone-age elections, bought brand-new cars for P1.2 million each, adding luxury cars to their growing fleet of . . . well, luxury cars.

Truth be told, anyway, I only want to say I share the view of Sergio Ortiz "hyphen" Luis, president of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Reportedly, Ortiz "hyphen" Luis said the budget deficit, which already hit P120 billion in the first half, should not raise undue concern from the business community.

Good! The budget deficit is giving this cute administration a king-size headache, but it should not raise undue concern among the top officials of the Comelec!

* * *

ANYWAY, to save the day for Gloriaetta's economic team, by bringing in more revenue, and thus bringing down the deficit, the BIR is doing a major rundown of the VAT.

That's the value added tax. The BIR found out that a lot of business outfits charge the VAT on us and then religiously remit it to their bank accounts—not the BIR. Nice!

Bañez told me that the BIR found a foolproof way to check the VAT collection. It won't even allow the crooks outside the BIR to collude with the crooks inside.

In May, its collection was up by some 9 percent; in June, about 21 percent; in the first half of July, already more than 50 percent. Bañez must be doing something right.

That's why the BIR now shows signs of recovering from the debacle of last April. That month, its collection was down by more than P10 billion.

Know what? In the first four months of the year, the shortfall in BIR collection was primarily all thanks to the large taxpayers. They were the BIR's most important tax mates.

Now, a big worry of big business, based on the latest survey of big business, as done by the club of big business known as the Makati (big?) Business Club, is corruption.

Who is doing all the corrupting, of course, the survey did not, or could not, say. Large taxpayers, in BIR parlance, nevertheless, only means big business.

* * *

WHATEVER happened to the cargo of that famous tugboat whose Indonesia crew gave this cute administration a lot of embarrassment by allowing themselves to be kidnapped?

By now, the cargo must be doing somersaults in our lungs. Remember, the cargo was coal, imported, of course, which was most probably also not fully tax paid!

Certain dear senators of ours, to think, already wasted away their vocal chords, talking about the Clean Air Act, and we are still importing poison for our lungs.

Come on, we all heard about the "black lung disease," which miners all over the world get for staying too long in those coal tunnels.

Yet, the miners just inhale the coal dust. Imagine, we inhale the smoke from the coal generating plants, which is really pure coal—not dust—which is not burned.

Every year, we spend something like P10 billion for coal, imported, of course, just to keep our old, rundown coal-generating plants running.

The government itself does the importation through the government corporation PNOC Coal Corp., which nowadays specializes only in trading—i.e. coal importation.

Look at that. We spend dollars in this country where the central bank will kill for dollars, and all for what? I know! So our children can catch all kinds of lung diseases!

* * *

WE are still hearing a lot about the Sona in the news from morning until midnight. Maybe Gloriaetta likes that! Good or bad, as they say, publicity is still publicity.

It seems that, based on the news yesterday, today and tomorrow—plus the following days to come—the Sona has different messages to different people.

It is beginning to do the job of the horoscope. Everything that happens to you is there somewhere, as long as you think it is there somewhere.

Next thing you know, you are already using the Sona to find out if your boyfriend still loves you or not. Moreover, you are even a man!

Anyway, militant groups said the Sona only meant that Gloriaetta would impose on us a martial law style of government. It was clear. She talked about a "strong republic."

That, believe it or not, meant martial law to them.

* * *

REALLY, nobody in my circle of friends thought those groups even cared to listen to the Sona. Instead of listening, to begin with, they were busy doing things in the streets.

Again, this is the only Sona that I ever had the privilege of not hearing yet, and there were already a lot of reaction. Gloriaetta must be ecstatic! It drew a lot of interest.

In mainstream politics, the opposition, or what is left of it, has nothing good to say about the Sona. Of course, no, they are the opposition.

If the opposition praises the Sona, how then can any of them, meaning, their own man or woman or whatever, expect to deliver the Sona in 2004 until 2010?

That's why the business community claims that investors do not invest because they worry about too much politics.

But of all the groups, at least business was happy with the Sona. It really sounded like a direct response to the main concerns of business.

This, to me, is all there is to the Sona. You did not have to bother to go to the market to check the price of fish. It was about the economy, stupid!

Okay, fish stories can make for sensational news. But sometimes even rotten news people like me don't want to stoop down that low.

Steel firms seek ban on scrap metal exports; junk yards slam petition

THE PHILIPPINE Steel Makers Association led by Cathay Pacific Steel Co. (Capasco) is seeking a ban on scrap metal exports to force junk dealers to sell their goods only to local players.

At least 200 junk yard firms, however, have banded together to form the Scrap Collector and Recycler Association of the Philippines (SCRAP) to block the PSMA's petition before the Department of Trade and Industry.

They maintain that preventing them from exporting scrap metal will only allow steel companies like Capasco to dictate prices.

Scrap insists that junk dealers get more from scrap metal buyers from South Korea and Japan.

In comparison, local companies not only pay less but also pay longer, apart from being very picky.

Junk dealers have complained that they are forced to wait for up to six months to get their money, and that local steel makers do not buy galvanized iron sheets and tin cans.

SCRAP asked the government to reject PSMA's bid to impose an export ban, saying it would deprive junk dealers an alternative market for their goods.

The group said its members would gladly supply the scrap metal requirements of local players, but insisted that these firms compete with foreign buyers by paying on time and not being too selective.

Capasco, PSMA's lead firm, is owned by Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce Inc. president John Ng, an industry adviser of former President Joseph Estrada.

Apart from Capasco, other PSMA firms lobbying for an export ban are SKK Steel Corp., Stronghold Steel Industries Corp., Amalgamated Ironworks Inc. and Elegant Steel Corp. These firms use scrap metal to produce steel billets.

Scrap has appealed to President Macapagal-Arroyo to live up to her promise of opposing any form of monopolistic pricing that will occur if the PSMA succeeds in getting the trade department's nod for a ban. ***Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.***

Shares . . .

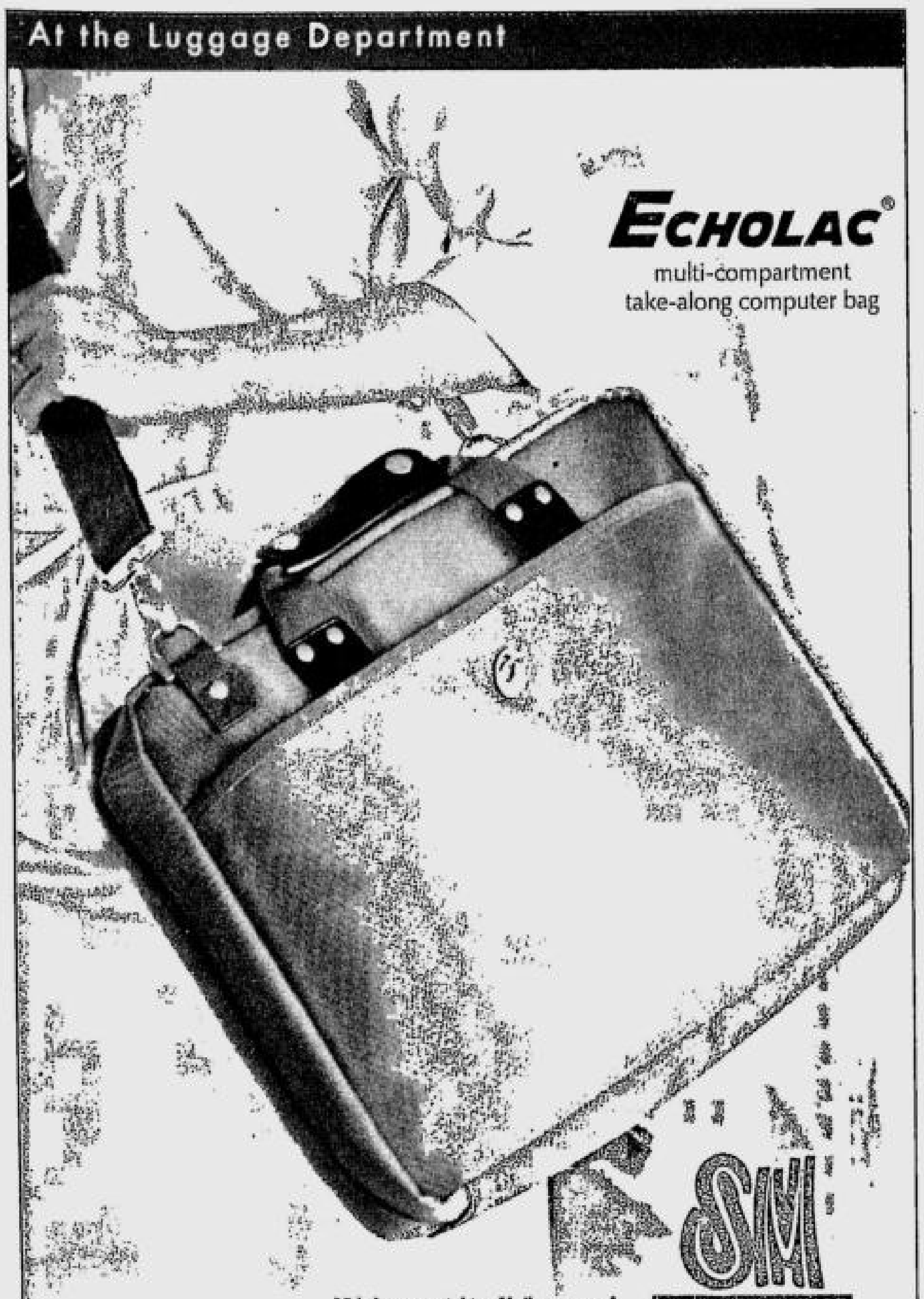
From page B1

Trading volume dipped to P330.8 million from Tuesday's P347.48 million. Twenty-seven stocks declined, 12 gained and 46 were unchanged.

"This has something to do with the huge budget deficit for the first semester. It appears the government did not do enough to prevent the deficit from swelling," said Henry Ong, KGI Securities vice president for sales.

"I think we will continue to trend downward in coming sessions due to a lack of market-inspiring news," Ong said. *Reuters*

At the Luggage Department



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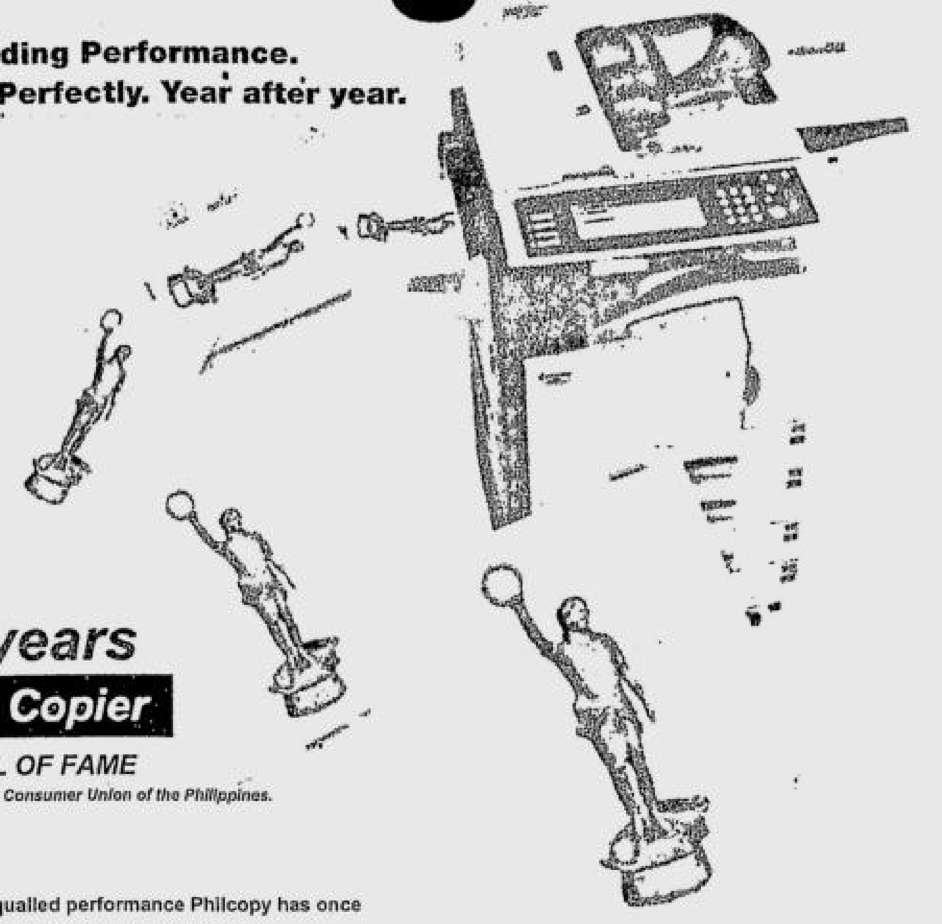

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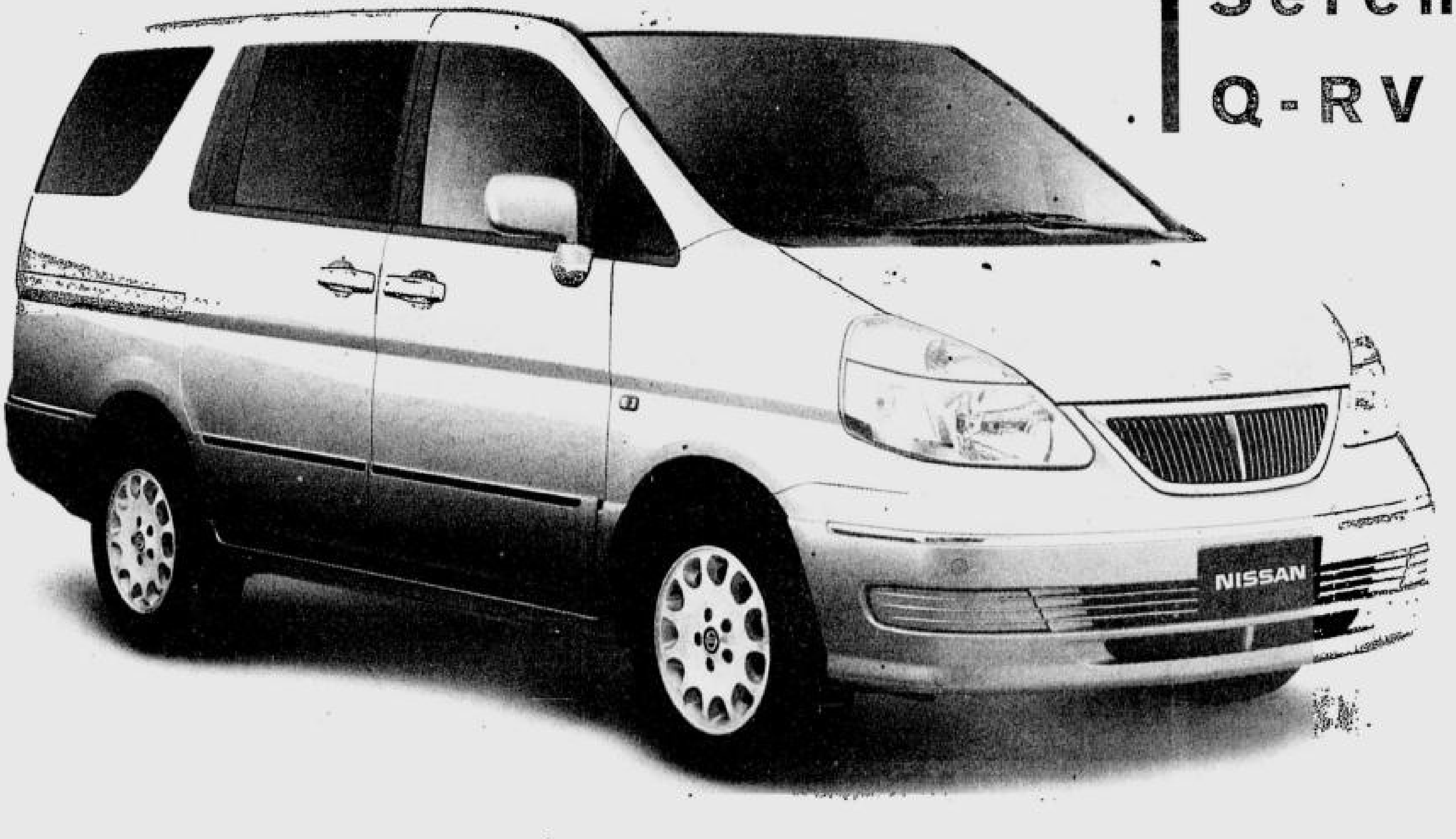

Finally, a recreational vehicle that considers the need of every passenger. From a sporty, European-style look to its flexible seating arrangements to its Mobile VCD Entertainment System, the new Nissan Serena Q-RV might just deliver the impossible: make everyone happy—all at once.

• Nissan Motor Philippines Inc. reserves the right to alter specifications on actual model without prior notice.
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People, Events & Products
Aries Espinosa, Editor
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Westgate Center expected to set trends in Alabang retailing

INNOVATIVE property developer Filinvest Alabang Inc. is set to launch a new lifestyle center called 'Westgate' within the burgeoning Filinvest Corporate City in Alabang, Muntinlupa. The project is expected to be onstream by September.

It will be the second retail development for Filinvest, coming on the heels of the 200,000-sqm Festival Supermall.

Bucking flat rates of growth in the real-estate sector, Filinvest is bullish on the prospects of Westgate, which will combine destination shopping with dining and entertainment. Unlike traditional entertainment centers, which come to life only in the evenings, Westgate is a day-to-night concept that promises a complete and well-rounded shopping and lifestyle experience, thus assuring continued customer traffic and patronage 24 hours a day. By night, Westgate will provide the perfect setting for alfresco wining and dining and entertainment activities.

This new and exciting development is set to meet the changing needs of consumers and retailers by providing la ow-rise, specialty lifestyle center. Its architectural setup will provide for a sophisticated shopping experience with the convenience of drive-up retail in an open-air streetscape and park-like environment. Wesgate will also provide the comfort of an all-weather shopping experience with its canopied walkways that will link buildings within the area. Its wide sidewalk will be ideal for street partying and other outdoor fun events.

Westgate sits on a 9.5-hectare property accessible to three major road networks, Alabang-Zapote Road, Filinvest Avenue and Commerce Avenue. Westgate is expected to draw traffic from the rich corridor of posh subdivisions in the Alabang area.

The masterplanned, mixed-use development will be comprised of three sectors: the "Home Precinct" featuring home furnishing, electronics, destination fitness-gym and spa, as well as specialty food, coffee and deli outlets. The "Central Precinct" will have fine-dining restaurants as well as clubs and other leisure centers, including bookstores, sports and hobby shops. The "Auto Precinct" features a series of car retail and accessory stores as well as showrooms and service centers alongside quick service restaurants and convenience stores.

Targeted at the high-end of the retail market, Westgate has already attracted international anchors and local stores such as Fitness First Gym and Spa, Country Waffles, Brothers Burger, Bargo, Twist by Minggoy's, East West Bank, and a number of auto shops and furniture outlets.

Designed by Australian-based architectural firm Davenport Campbell, Westgate's layout will offer significantly increased parking and convenient traffic flow. Peripheral tracts will be developed for more retail offerings, offices and hotel and restaurants spaces.

BANKING LAW AUTHOR AT BOOK LAUNCH

The Philippine General Banking Law (Annotated)', authored by lawyer Rafael A. Morales, was recently launched. Shown at the launching are (from left) Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura, Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo, Morales, Sycip Law managing partner Andres Gatmaitan, Dr. Natalia MLM Morales, DBP SVP Sally Magat, and PNB-UP branch manager Marilyn Yap.

The Rotary Club of Makati Northeast
Welcomes you to its
5th Anniversary

RC MAKATI NORTHEAST TURNS 5

The Rotary Club of Makati Northeast recently held its 5th charter anniversary and turnover ceremonies at the Superferry 12 at Pier 4 of the North Harbor. Seated, from left, are charter president Allan Panaligan, IPP/director Richard Acuna and president Jun Avellanosa. Standing, from left, are club officers and members TJ del Rosario, Paolo Flores, Melba Flores, PE Dona Ado, director Rey Marukot, Ryan Isip, Joyce Maneze, Patrick Maneze, club advisers Dr. Perry Noble and Tony Chong, Chuchi Balili, secretary Cherry Pie Valencia, treasurer Norie Lagura, director Litho Balangue, director Mila Gonzaga and PP/director Chito Perlada.

RobinsonsBank
ABN-AMRO
Formal Turnover Ceremonies of
AASB Branches to Robinsons Savings Bank

ABN AMRO TURNS OVER 20 BANKS TO RSB

RSB chair Lance Gokongwei (4th from left) and ABN Amro vice chair and president Carmelo Maria Luza Bautista (3rd from left) formalized RSB's acquisition of 20 ABN Amro branches in a move to expand its bank operations in the country. The turnover ceremony was recently held at the Manila Galleria Suites and attended by top executives of both banks, namely (front row, from left) ABN Amro HR head Celia Villarosa, ABN Amro director and strategic business head Naeem Bashir Ahmad, and RSB president and CEO Reynold Gerongay. At the back, from left, are ABN Amro credit and collection head Shehryar Shah, RSB VP for Corplan Mykel D. Abad, RSB SVP for treasury Betty D. Go, RSB SVP for branches and operations Angelito V. Evangelista, and RSB legal counsel lawyer Danny E. Bunyi.

CCAC outstanding manufacturer at CUP Awards

CONCEPCION-CARRIER Air Conditioning Company (CCAC) was recently named "Outstanding Air Conditioner Manufacturer" by the Consumers Union of the Philippines during the 13th Annual National Consumers Awards held recently at The Manila Hotel.

CCAC's selection was based on its outstanding performance in the following key areas: reliability and availability of its products, safety features, reasonableness of price and honesty of claims.

"This award is particularly satisfying as it recognizes our efforts at meeting consumer needs and expectations," said Rafael Hechanova Jr., CCAC director for sales and marketing. "Consumer satisfaction is our primary concern," he added.

CCAC is the country's leading manufacturer of air conditioners, particularly the Carrier, Condura and Kelvinator brands with a product mix ranging from window room air conditioner, package and split equipment to applied and commercial products.

Fil-Ams study Filipino in La Salle

THE DEPARTAMENTO ng Literatura at Wikang Filipino (DLWF) of De La Salle University-Manila is hosting the Filipino-American delegates who are enrolled in the University of Hawaii's Advanced Filipino Abroad Program (Afap) at the International Conference Center from June 15 to July 26.

This year, the Afap has 12 student participants.

Funded by the US Department of Education Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad Program, the Afap was established in 1991 and is designed to provide American teachers and students the opportunity to learn the Filipino language in a Philippine setting through a unique short-term immersion program.

Unlike the typical travel abroad programs, it focuses on advanced-level language acquisition and consists of a structured academic program of four hours every morning and up to three hours of task-based language use in the afternoon.

Students evaluated the program positively. Their overall response speaks highly of their maximum exposure to Philippine language and culture. The experience not only adds to their language competence, it also develops greater awareness and sensitivity towards another culture, and possibly of their own.

Product FILES

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SONY DIGICAM AT GRAPHIC EXPO 2002

Sony Philippines, a majority-owned subsidiary of Sony Corp. of Japan and the country's leader in consumer electronics, showcased a breakthrough in digital camera technology at the Graphic Exposition 2002 recently held at the Philippine Trade and Training Center. Called Universal Serial Business (USB) Streamlining, this technology allows Sony digital camera recorders to connect to the Web. Just by hooking up a Sony digital camera to a PC and installing the video conferencing software, it can act as an image capturing device, making it possible to confer on video, playback videos and capture live recordings. Another product showcased was the Pixela ImageMixer, an editing software for digital video and still cameras that also uses the USB Streamlining.

SALES APPRECIATION AWARD

Nokia Home Communications (NHC) general manager Martin Fernandez (left) bestows a sales appreciation award to Jerry Tan of SVC Enterprises during a dealers' lunch at the Manila Peninsula Hotel. The gathering recognized NHC's 15 most outstanding dealers and business partners. NHC's premium product offering is the Nokia Mediamaster 8830S, a user-friendly satellite receiver perfect for both encoded pay TV and free digital channels. It comes with a built-in modem for interactive services such as pay-per-view, games and shopping.

GET TOGETHER FOR UP DORMERS

The send-off dinner thrown by lawyer Charito Protacio-Cruz at the Manila Polo Club for Golly Estenzo Ramos, who has joined a growing number of Cebuanos opting for a more relaxed lifestyle in the province, was an occasion for an instant get-together among the dormers of Sampaguita Residence Hall of the UP Diliman Campus. 1974 Sampaguita residents are invited to subscribe to upsampa@yahoogroups.com for the chance to touch base again with the group and discuss reunions and projects in the offing. Shown at the dinner are (from left) Dr. Nina Chikiamco Dizon, Cruz-Protacio, Ramos, Marilene Luspo-Araneta, lawyer Elizabeth Pulumbarit, Becks Marana Galvez Tan, Phoebe Okol Cabanilla, lawyer Minnie Aldaba-Morada, Ines Avellana Fernandez, Raval, and lawyer Malu Raneses Raval.

LTO CHIEF AT MEDIA FORUM

LTO Chief Roberto Lastimoso (center) was the media guest speaker at the Tuesday's lunch 'Bulong Pulungan' forum at the Westin Philippine Plaza Hotel recently. He spoke on LTO's intensified drive against smoke belching vehicles. At left is Deedee Siytangco, forum moderator and Frank Evaristo, president of Alay Lakad Foundation.

BITS & Clips

SWI Greenhills triple treat at 3

FROM JULY 23 to 25, the Slimmers World Greenhills branch will be celebrating its 3rd anniversary. It will hold an aero marathon and party. Also, all services, including massage treatments, facials and memberships will be on sale. For more details, call 726-6505 to 06 and look for Cathy Cheng.

Cruz's works at The Crucible Gallery

RAMONCITO Ocampo Cruz presents his latest artworks in "Recent Paintings," on view from July 25 to Aug. 13 at The Crucible Gallery, fourth floor, SM Megamall. Cruz trained to be a painter under Wenceslao Garcia, Bonifacio Cristobal and Leonardo Hidalgo at the UST College of Architecture and Fine Arts during the '70s. Having been influenced by his father Remigio Cruz, who studied under National Artist Fernando Amorsolo, his painting style represents a baroque rather than a modern idiom.. His works now exhibit a mature visual sensibility and inner calm. His subjects are mundane but real, from lemons to wine bottles, calla lilies, carnations and birds-of-paradise, tea kettles and tropical palms. For inquiries, call 635-6061 or log on to www.cruciblegallery.com.

'Crisis and Suicide Interventions'

THE UST Graduate School's Center for Professional Development and Consultancy Services will hold a seminar on "Crisis and Suicide Interventions" on July 30 and 31, from 1 to 7 p.m. at the Seminar Workshop Room 6 of the Thomas Aquinas Research Complex, University of Santo Tomas, Espana, Manila. The seminar fee of P3,500 includes seminar kits, snacks and certificates. Registration forms are available at the UST Graduate School and at Room 113, Thomas Aquinas Research Complex. The deadline of submission of registration forms is on July 26 to the aforementioned, or fax them at 731-5396 or 740-9732. For inquiries, call 731-3101 local 4051.

JPIA-PCU's 'Beyond Borders'

THE JUNIOR Philippine Institute of Accountants-Philippine Christian University Chapter led by its president Glenn G. Nolasco will hold its 1st general assembly on July 29, 2 to 6 p.m. at the University Auditorium, with the theme "JPIA-PCU: Beyond Borders". Ronald B. Ramos, VP internal, chairs the program. The keynote speakers will be Dr. Oscar Suarez, PCU president and professor Felilia M. Ronan, dean of the CBAA. The affair seeks not only to bolster ties and promote camaraderie among students, it also seeks to foster active participation of its members as well. Incumbent officers of the 25th batch will be presented along with the calendar of activities for the present school year.

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Armed Forces of the Philippines invites all manufacturers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF ONE (1) LOT AFP GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS)**, with an approved budget of **Twenty Three Million Forty Thousand Pesos (Php 23,040,000.00)** under the **AFP Modernization Program.**

Only bids from suppliers who are themselves the manufacturers of said equipment shall be entertained.

Bid documents will be available for issuance starting **July 18, 2002** until **August 1, 2002** during office hours at the BAC Secretariat, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Capability, Materiel and Technology Development, J9, AFP, 3rd Floor, Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City upon payment of **Three Thousand Pesos (Php 3,000.00)** which is not refundable. The form of payment will be in cash or cashier's check payable to the AFP.

A Special Power of Attorney, issued by the prospective bidder authorizing its representative to purchase the bid documents in its behalf, shall be required before issuance of the bid documents.

A Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled on **August 1, 2002** at **2:00 PM (local time)** at the *Silid Panday Pira, OJ9, 1st Floor Bulwagang Mabini, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.* Bidders are required to submit their queries in writing to the BAC Secretariat prior to the Pre-Bid Conference.

Bidders shall be allowed to inspect the existing AFP Communication System and Installations upon purchase of bid documents on a designated schedule as determined by the BAC.

Deadline for submission of Bid Documents (First Stage) is on **August 15, 2002** at **9:00 AM (local time)** and followed by the Opening of Bids at **10:00 AM** at the *Silid Panday Pira, OJ9, First Floor Bulwagang Mabini, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.*

The Armed Forces of the Philippines reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive deficiencies embodied therein without assuming any obligation whatsoever for any expenses or losses that may be incurred by the bidder in the preparation of the bid.

(Sgd.) **NARCISO L ABAYA**
Lieutenant General AFP
Chairman, BAC

(PDI – July 18 & 25, 2002)

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JGB Associates, Inc.
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POEA-307-LB-071300-R
Announces the appointment of TOMAS CABILI as Overseas Marketing Executive effective June 19, 2002 and the resignation of EDUARDO BONDAD as its Director and Corporate Secretary effective July 22, 2002.
(PDI-July 25, 2002)

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the heirs of LILYBETH OCAMPO VILLARUZ was extrajudicially settled among her heirs per Notary Public ATTY. RAMON B. GATMAYTAN of Mandaluyong, under Doc. No. 343; Page No. 70; Book No. V; Series of 2002. (July 11, 18, 25, 2002)

PUBLIC NOTICES

PERSONAL

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT
Holy Spirit thou who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. You who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dialogue, want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You, no matter how great the material desires may be. I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your Perpetual Glory. Amen.
Person must pray this 3 consecutive days without stating one's wish. After 3rd day your wish will be granted no matter how difficult it may be. Promise to publish this as soon as your favor has been granted -- SLM

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PLDT launches $130-M term loan facility

By Abigail L. Ho

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT), the country's dominant telecom firm, said yesterday that it had launched a $130-million multi-currency term loan facility that would help pay off almost half of its principle loans maturing next year.

In a statement, PLDT said it had mandated Citigroup and ING Bank as joint lead managers and bookrunners for the loan. BNP Paribas and Mizuho are participating as joint lead arrangers.

The multi-currency term loan will be drawn by PLDT in 2003, with semi-annual amortization beginning June 2004 and a final maturity of December 2006. The company said about two-thirds of the facility amount had been committed by existing lenders.

This refinancing is a key component of the company's comprehensive liability management program that aims to address PLDT's more than $1.3 billion in maturing obligations from this year to 2004.

Under its liability management initiative, PLDT would term out around half of its maturing obligations between 2002 and 2004 as well as reduce its overall indebtedness by improving operational efficiencies and strengthening internal cash generation.

The multi-currency facility would help settle a 19-billion-yen syndicated term loan and a $103-million debt which are both maturing in 2003.

Prior to this, PLDT had successfully concluded borrowing activities, which included a $149 million KfW/Hermes term loan and a $350-million notes issue.

"The liability management program of PLDT has two major elements, first to term out about 50 percent of its debts maturing between 2002 and 2004 and second, to reduce overall indebtedness," the company said in a statement.

The company has been actively pursuing cost containment initiatives and capital expenditure reduction. The company said these activities "have already begun to positively impact PLDT's results."

The company had earlier assured all its shareholders that its liability management efforts were on track despite the issues it faced with its parent firm, First Pacific Co. Ltd.

DISCLOSURES

AYALA Land Inc. declared a regular cash dividend of 3 centavos per share and a special cash dividend of 15 centavos per share. Both dividends are in favor of stockholders as of Aug. 6 and shall be payable on Sept. 6.

* * *

SM Prime Holdings Inc. created the nomination, remuneration and audit and compensation and committees. The company also elected the following: Emmanuel Paras as compliance officer, vice president and corporate secretary, and Christopher Bautista as internal auditor.

* * *

MEDCO Holdings Inc. moved its annual stockholders' meeting to Sept. 12 with record date on Aug. 12.*Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Wednesday, July 24, 2002)

(STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17	17	17	17	31,900
Bank of the Phil. Islands	49.5	50	48.5	48.5	891,700
China Banking Corp.	620	620	620	620	140
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	29.5	30.5	29.5	29.5	678,900
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	34	34	33	34	214,900
Philippine National Bank	33	33	32	32	5,300
Security Bank Corp.	14	14	14	14	4,100
Union Bank of the Phil.	18.25	18.25	18.25	18.25	48,900
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Manulife Financial Corp.	1175	1175	1175	1175	790
Sun Life Financial Serv.	885	900	880	880	860
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	23	23	22.25	22.25	4,500
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.72	0.72	0.68	0.68	3,050,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	525	530	520	525	26,480
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.027	0.027	0.027	0.027	500,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.029	0.029	0.026	0.027	24,200,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3	3	3	3	10,000
Piltel	0.32	0.32	0.3	0.3	1,600,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	10,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	340	340	325	325	134,670
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.012	24,900,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	19.75	19.75	19.75	19.75	5,900
Manila Electric Co. B	28	28	27.5	28	713,700
Petron Corp.	1.76	1.76	1.74	1.76	3,183,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.74	1.74	1.74	1.74	40,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	140,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	7,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.4	2.42	2.4	2.42	493,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.36	0.39	0.36	0.39	70,000
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Union Cement Corp.	0.71	0.71	0.7	0.7	810,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
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La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	32	32	31.5	32	16,200
RFM Corp.	0.92	0.93	0.92	0.93	60,000
Swift Food Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	90,000
San Miguel Corp. A	46.5	47	46	47	53,500
San Miguel Corp. B	52.5	52.5	51.5	52	51,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	5.4	5.4	5.3	5.4	1,378,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.0825	0.0825	0.0825	0.0825	150,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.42	2.46	2.42	2.44	7,445,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	700
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.27	0.28	0.25	0.28	440,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	10,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	12,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.34	1,600,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.07	0.1	0.07	0.1	400,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	100,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	700,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	775,000
First Phil Hldgs. Corp.	12.75	13.75	12.5	13.25	2,243,900
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	2,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.68	0.68	0.67	0.68	350,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	40,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	1,210,000
Music Corp.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	80,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	600,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Cirro-Coal Inc.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	1,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.055	2,000,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	2,250,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	290,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	100,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
Jollibee Warrants	12.25	12.25	12.25	12.25	99,300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10	10	10	10	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10	10	10	10	100
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	450	450	450	450	10
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.1	6.2	6	6	10,915,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	500,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.175	0.175	0.175	0.175	670,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	100,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.3	2.3	2.24	2.24	86,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	1.88	1.88	1.88	1.88	180,000
City & Land Developers	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	5,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	100,000
SM Development Corp.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	100,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.8	5.8	5.7	5.7	6,720,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.2	0.2	0.195	0.195	810,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.215	0.215	0.2	0.2	280,000
Omico Corp.	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	6,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't. Corp.	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	1,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	550,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	1,450,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.055	100,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	1,100,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.41	0.43	0.41	0.43	760,000

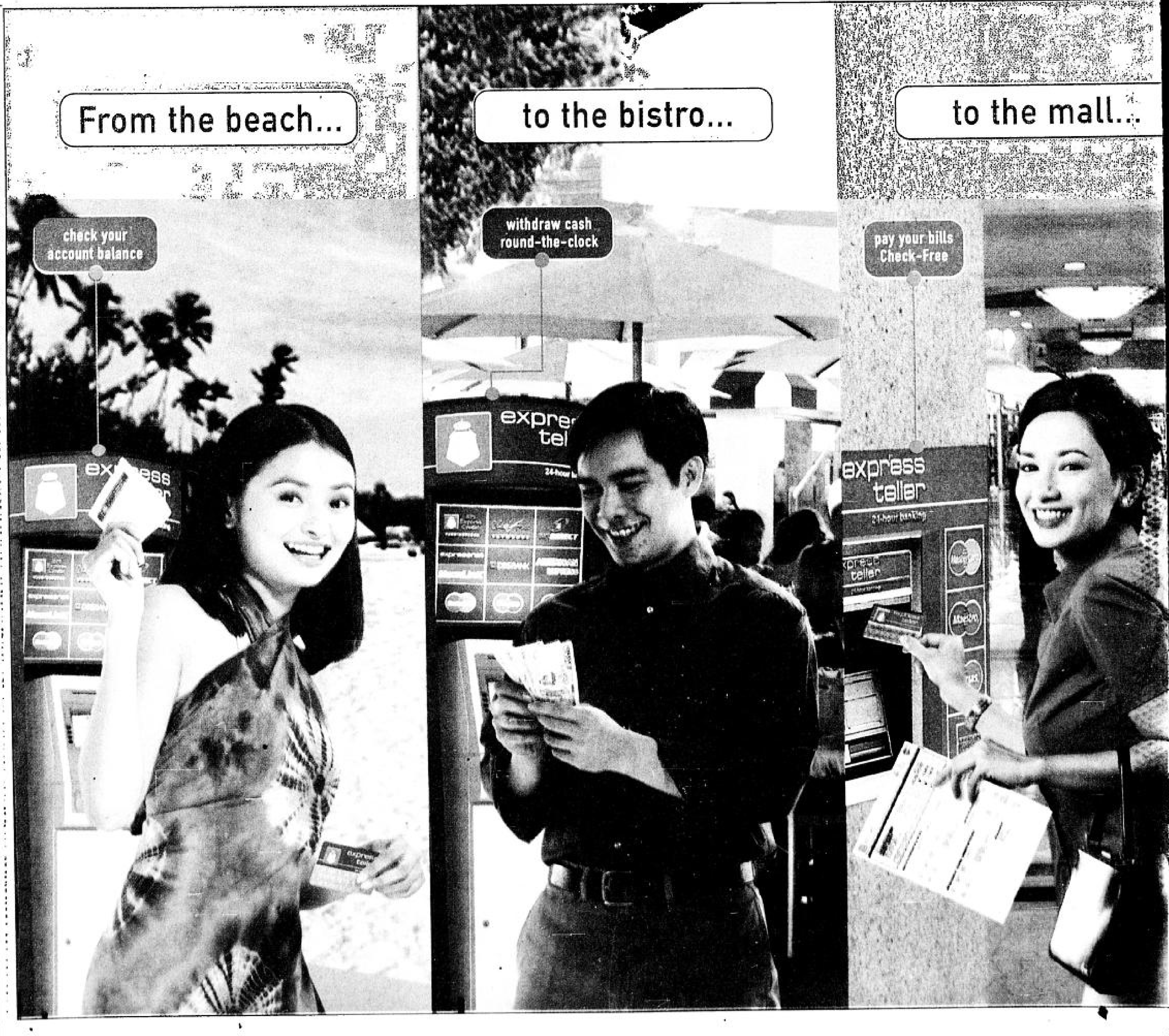
	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	1,679,490	64,600,525.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	84,888,660	160,656,795.00
PRO	19,376,000	106,199,350.00
Mining	10,190,000	781,350.00
OIL	1,860,000	329,900.00
GRAND TOTALS:	117,994,150	332,567,920.00
AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	460.58	DOWN 4.97
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,570.15	DOWN 10.16
PRO	530.84	DOWN 3.86
Mining	1,203.58	DOWN 53.11
OIL	1.29	UP 0.03
All Shares Index	637.43	DOWN 16.37
Composite	1,149.03	DOWN 9.02

NO. OF ADVANCES: 12; NO. OF DECLINES: 27; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 46; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 85; NO. OF TRADES: 1,687

CURRENCIES

July 24, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.011634	1.000000	50.5730
Japan	Yen	0.008605	0.008506	0.4302
United Kingdom	Pound	1.580475	1.562300	79.0102
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.129699	0.128207	6.4838
Switzerland	Franc	0.688280	0.680365	34.4081
Canada	Dollar	0.638617	0.631273	31.9254
Singapore	Dollar	0.579401	0.572738	28.9651
Australia	Dollar	0.552202	0.545852	27.6054
Bahrain	Dinar	2.683521	2.652661	134.1530
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.269769	0.266667	13.4862
Brunei	Dollar	0.582135	0.575440	29.1017
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000112	0.000111	0.0056
Thailand	Baht	0.024710	0.024426	1.2353
UAE	Dirham	0.275447	0.272279	13.7700
Korea	Won	0.000873	0.000863	0.0436
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.988500	49.9914
Argentina	Real	0.279457	0.276243	13.9704
Brazil	Real	0.347880	0.343879	17.3910
Denmark	Kroner	0.134321	0.132776	6.7149
India	Rupee	0.020815	0.020576	1.0406
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.266255	0.263193	13.3105
Mexico	New Peso	0.104833	0.103627	5.2407
New Zealand	Dollar	0.482649	0.477099	24.1283
Norway	Kroner	0.132022	0.130504	6.6000
Pakistan	Rupee	0.016902	0.016708	0.8450
South Africa	Rand	0.100660	0.099502	5.0321
Sweden	Kroner	0.105480	0.104267	5.2731
Syria	Pound	0.019681	0.019455	0.9839
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.030517	0.030166	1.5256
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000769	0.000760	0.0384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UN report says IMF, World Bank, WTO unfair, out of touch

MANILA—International institutions like the International Monetary Fund and World Bank are dominated by a few rich countries and are out of touch with the world's poor, a UN report said Wednesday.

The divide between rich and poor has sparked a powerful "anti-globalization" backlash that is "one of the most important movements of our time," the UN Development Program's annual Human Development Report said.

The report acknowledged that rich countries would always influence global decisions but said poorer countries should participate more, especially on issues that directly affected their people.

"Whether it is the trade barriers and subsidies that keep the poor country farmers out of rich country markets or the slow response to the spread of HIV/AIDS in Africa, the leading global powers and institutions stand accused of being unfair and out of touch," the report said.

The sometimes violent anti-globalization movement reflects the "split between the powerful and the powerless" and questions about "whether the world is going in the right direction," it said.

Protesters in both developed and developing countries were concerned "that poor people and countries are losing out in the way global affairs are managed," the report added.

Nearly half the voting power in the World Bank and International Monetary Fund rests in the hands of seven countries—the United States, Japan, France, Britain, Saudi Arabia, Germany and Russia.

It also noted that men made up 100 percent of the IMF's board of directors and 92 percent of the World Bank's.

While all countries have a seat and a vote in the World Trade Organization, decision-making is heavily influenced by Canada, the European Union, Japan and the United States, the report said.

To address the imbalance, it proposed eliminating the United Nations Security Council veto and reforming the selection process for the heads of IMF and World Bank. *AP*

AP

A THAI investor looks at an electronic board showing stock prices at a private stock trading floor in Bangkok.

Investors singing the Wall Street blues, as brutal days keep on

NEW YORK—These are brutal days on Wall Street and when the going gets tough, the tough get . . . well, a little bit depressed actually.

With the Dow Jones industrials index plunging to its lowest level since October 1998 and the Nasdaq faring even worse, the high-octane world of the trading floor is suddenly running on empty.

"It's depressing, you know. Traders get very depressed," said Todd Leone, managing director of equity trading at SG Cowen Securities Corp.

"It's difficult to come in every day and lose money. Everybody I talk to is tired. It's like 'Oh I need a couple of days off. The markets have been beating me up.' That's how you feel."

Rational thought seems to have fled the US stock markets, chased away by a tidal wave of emotion or, more specifically, outright panic, among investors whose confidence has been shattered by a series of corporate scandals.

The psychological meltdown has left people like Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan and New York Stock Exchange Chair Richard Grasso looking like waterlogged Little Dutch Boys, struggling to plug gaping holes in the dike of public concern.

"Please be patient. Please don't do something that emotionally feels good but, in the long term, will be a mistake," Grasso pleaded to investors on Sunday after yet another week of market bloodletting.

President George W. Bush echoed the "don't panic" message on Monday, when he stressed that US economic fundamentals were strong despite the horrendous declines that had wiped $7 trillion off the value of stocks since March 2000.

"I know the economics—the platform for growth is in good shape," Bush said.

So far, such assurances have fallen on deaf ears, and investors are continuing to sell their positions almost as fast as the traders can trade them out.

The stressful nature of the job and the high burn-out rate mean that the composition of trading floors has always had a strong bias towards young, gung-ho operators.

So for many traders in their 20s and 30s, who reveled in the astonishing bull run of the 1990s, the current crisis is an entirely new and unsettling experience.

Suddenly, jobs are on the line and the prospect of the traditional hefty annual bonus has been wrenched away for the foreseeable future by the downward spiral of the Dow Jones average.

Unexpectedly, however, the trading floor seems to exude an eerie surface calm.

The emotional temperature and decibel levels may surge from time to time, but for the most part the atmosphere is subdued with the traders hunched somberly over their flashing screens.

"You still get some yelling, but I find when people are losing money they tend to be quieter," said Leone. "The jokes and the bravado just dry up after a while."

In such trying times, some companies are looking to relative "old-timers" to help guide their younger colleagues along.

"In fact, we're having a little pep talk tomorrow morning—our own little 'support group' if you will," said SG Cowen's experienced managing director of institutional research, Charles Pradilla, who believes the financial world is in the grip of the most severe bear market since the mid-1970s.

"We're all getting whacked. I'm running 80-percent cash and I'm still getting whacked," Pradilla said with a wry laugh and incredulous shrug of the shoulders.

"It's not easy. You have to remember that a lot of people on that floor also have stocks and they're hurting as much as the next investor, especially the middle-aged ones with families."

AFP

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Our Dearly Beloved

MAURO C. ARCE, SR.

Peacefully joined his Creator on July 22, 2002 at the age of 79.

His loving wife **PRISCILLA SORIANO-ARCE**

together with their children and grandchildren:

TITO & LINA ALVIR, Ariel, Chila, Jovince, Nini, Michael;
ELSIE & LOUIE ROMERO, Ramir, Minic, Mark;
MAURITA, Mauritz, Katrina Kuhn;
JUN & BING CASTAÑEDA, Analyn, Milon, Peaches, Brando;
RUDY & ARLENE CANILAO, Pritzi, Patricia, Andrei;
CYNTHIA & EDDIE JOSE, Peewee, Diana;
MIDA & ADRIAN JIMENEZ, Mayenne, JC;
EDMUND & JEAN FADUL, Kitty, Mikky, Miko;
DENNIS & LIZZIE CONCEPCION, Maui, Iñigo;
EDWIN & DIGNA ROXAS, Dave, Nika, Paulo;

grandchildren in-law, great grandchildren; friends and relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the family ancestral home, **VILLA ARCE, Selecta Compound, Quezon City**.

Requiem Mass will be at **9:00 a.m. on Sunday, July 28, 2002**.
Interment will immediately follow in the family mausoleum at **Holy Cross Memorial Park**.

"There is no limit to love's forbearance, to its trust, its hope, its power to endure.
Love never fails. There are in the end 3 things that last:
faith, hope, and love, and the greatest of these is Love."
1 Corinthians 13:7-13

MA. EDITHA *"Auntie Ed"* RAMOS GARCIA

of Balayan, Batangas
who peacefully joined her Creator on July 25, 1999.

In loving memory of her **Third Death Anniversary**, her loving family, her sister **Ma. Estelle Garcia Ortiz**; her brother **Jose R. Garcia Jr.** and all who knew her in life request readers to join us in remembering her in our prayers. Holy Masses will be offered at the following:

Ortiz Mausoleum, Himlayang Pilipino	10:00 AM
Sta. Rita Parish, Philam Homes, Quezon City	6:30 AM
Immaculate Conception Church, Balayan, Batangas	5:15 AM
St. Joseph Church, Aurora Boulevard, Project 4, Quezon City	7:00 AM
Sta. Clara Monastery, Aurora Blvd., Quezon City	6:00 AM
St. John Bosco Parish, Makati City	6:30 AM
Shrine of Mary, Queen of Peace (Our Lady of EDSA), Ortigas	12:00 NN
Madonna de la Strada, La Vista, Katipunan, Quezon City	6:00 PM
Sto. Niño de Paz Community, Greenbelt Chapel, AYALA Center	7:15 AM
Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City	6:15 AM
Holy Family Church, Glendale, CA, USA	8:00 AM
St. Joseph Church, Maple Place, Keyport, New Jersey	8:00 AM
Shrine of Immaculate Conception, Washington DC, USA	8:00 AM

"I am the resurrection and the Life;
he who believes in Me shall live; and
whoever dies and believes in Me never dies."
John 11:25-26

ONOFRE "Peng" C. SEBASTIAN

Peacefully joined his Creator on July 23, 2002
at the age of 56.

His bereaved wife **Roselle "Lala" Alonso**; children **Johann** (†), **Jonathan** (†), **Joanna**, **Jhonna**, **Jonina**, **Jornina** and **James Lo**, **Jourdan**, **Joseph** and **Josemaria**; and grandchildren **Jara** and **Jigs**, request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe.

Interment will be on July 27, 2002 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina after the celebration of the 8:00 a.m. Holy Mass at Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe.

WE DESIGN OBITUARIES FOR FREE.

In Loving Memory

On the Seventh Death Anniversary of

Estela M. Peñaflorida

who passed away on 26 July 1995

Masses will be offered Friday, 26 July 2002 at the following:

Sanctuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park	12:15 noon
Sanctuario de San Jose, Greenhills	7:15 a.m.
St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori, Magallanes	6:00 p.m.
Our Lady of Beautiful Love, Merville	6:00 p.m.
Parish of the Holy Sacrifice, U.P.	6:00 p.m.
St. Joseph's Church, Pototan, Iloilo	5:30 a.m.
St. Clement's Church, La Paz, Iloilo	5:30 p.m.

The family requests relatives, friends, and pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Atty. Gregorio E. Del Rosario

Has joined his Creator on July 20, 2002 at the age of 80.

His loving wife **Remedios**; children **Pedro**, **Belen**, **Linda**, **Tess**, **Mot**, **Jun** and **Doddie**; in-laws, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and relatives request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the family residence at 27 September St., Congressional Village, Quezon City.

There will be a Mass at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish at 9:00 a.m. Interment will follow at Eternal Gardens Memorial Park.

Dolores Gonzales Villaruz

Born on April 18, 1912

Peacefully joined her Creator on July 23, 2002 at the age of 90.

Her bereaved husband **Buenaventura** (†); only son **Jaime & Tessie** (†); grandchildren **Javy**, **Chelly**, **Eric**, **Rene**, **Mike**; sisters **Dominga Gonzalez Magno** (†), **Sr. Inocencia Gonzales, O.P.**, **Sr. Enriqueta Gonzales, O.P.**, **Sr. Remedios Gonzales, O.P.**; other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation will be on July 25, 2002, 6 p.m. at La Funeraria Paz.

Interment will be on Friday, July 26, 2002, 10:00 a.m. at San Nicolas de Tolentino Cathedral Crypt, Cabanatuan City.

"If we have died with Him, we shall also live with Him."
(2 Timothy 2:11)

Gloria "Baby" Castro Siccion

Peacefully joined her Creator
on July 24, 2002 at the age of 77.

Her loving husband **PABLO T. SICCION**; children **ED & Car (Viola)**, **Lou Anne**; **JUN & Emy (Arguelles)**, **Pipo**, **Shiela**, **Julianne**, **Lala & Patrick**; **GERRY**; **EUGENE & Hedy (Gogola)**, **Camille & Cara**; **ROLAND & Mae (Dumadaug)**, **Justine Mark**, request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Arlington East Garden Chapel,
C. Raymundo cor. Mercedes Avenue, Pasig City.

Interment will be announced later.

In lieu of flowers, please send your donations to CFC-Gawad Kalinga.

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.

John 3:16

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES LOS BAÑOS
College, Laguna

INVITATION TO BID

The University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) invites interested parties to submit sealed bids for the public bidding of Case Pump with a total approved budget of P1,444,450.00 for the Physical Plant Maintenance & Services Office (PPMSO), Laboratory Materials & Equipment with a total approved budget of P1,218,000.00 for the Institute of Mathematical Sciences & Physics (IMSP) and Hospital Equipment (Rebid) with a total approved budget of P1,051,950.00 for the University Health Service (UHS), UPLB, College, Laguna.

Interested parties may secure bid documents and the checklist of the qualification requirements from Supply and Property Management Office (SPMO).

The schedule of the bidding activities is as follows:

Particulars	Date/Time	Place
Issuance of Bid Documents	July 31-Aug. 9/8:30am-5:00pm	SPMO
Pre-Bid Conference	Aug. 16, 2002, Fri./10:00 am	SPMO
Opening/submission of bids	Aug. 23, 2002, Fri./10:00 am	SPMO

Bidders shall submit two (2) sealed envelopes containing a) TECHNICAL DOCUMENTS (e.g. qualification requirements indicated in the checklist, bid security as to form, amount and validity period, authority of signatory, after sales service/parts, catalogues/brochures/other literatures, etc.); and b) FINANCIAL DOCUMENTS at the Supply and Property Management Office, UPLB.

The UPLB reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason waive any defect therein and make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the UPLB. The UPLB likewise assumes no obligation for whatever losses that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that the award shall be made.

(Sgd.) DR. TERESITA M. ESPINO
Chair, PBAC

(PDI--July 24 & 25, 2002)

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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Department of Science and Technology - Bids and Awards Committee (DOST-Wide BAC) hereby invites local suppliers, to apply for eligibility and to bid in the forthcoming public bidding for the project entitled "Appropriate Use of IT Facilities and New Technologies for Teaching-Learning Science". The approved budget for the purpose is P12,081,600.00 chargeable against SEI. The scope of works includes the supply, delivery, installation and testing of 305 units of PCs and 183 units of inkjet printers nationwide. The minimum specifications for the PC is Pentium III, 1000Mhz, Asustek motherboard (no built-in audio and video), 20.4 GB HDD; SMB AGP (video card not built-in); sound card (separate card); 15" SGVA color monitor; Windows Millenium Edition OEM, etc. For inkjet printers minimum specifications is 8ppm for black; 5ppm for colored; 110 true typefaces, etc. Warranty of PCs and printers is 3 years on labor, on site services and 1 year on parts except consumables.

Only those eligible bidders evaluated by the DOST-Wide BAC shall be allowed to participate in the bidding.

All eligible bidders may secure the necessary documents on the following dates:

Issuance of Eligibility Requirements	July 29-30, 2002, Rm. 207 DOST Bldg. Gen. Santos Ave., Bicutan, Taguig
Submission of Eligibility Requirements	August 5, 2002 until 5:00 p.m. at Rm. 207, DOST Bldg., Gen. Santos Ave., Bicutan, Taguig
Issuance of bidding documents	August 7, 2002 Rm. 207 DOST Bldg.
Pre-bid Conference	August 12, 2002; 10:00 a.m. / DOST Executive Lounge
Opening of bids	August 19, 2002; 10:00 a.m. /DOST Executive Lounge, Bicutan, Taguig

Prospective bidders may surf our DOST website addressed at: http//www.dost.gov.ph.

The DOST-Wide BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any formality and make an award to the bidder whose bid proposal is the lowest calculated responsive bid and advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) JOCELYN G. ALVARADO
Assistant Secretary and
Chairperson, DOST-Wide BAC

(PDI--July 25 & 27, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
Regional Office No. III
City of San Fernando, Pampanga

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given that ORs #1238500 and 5392860 belonging to the Department of Labor and Employment, Regional Office No. III, have been lost/misplaced. It is therefore advised that any transaction entered into by any individual/agency/firm resulting to the issuance of said lost/misplaced Official Receipts shall not be honored by the DOLE-RO3.

(Sgd.) JOSEFINO I. TORRES
Director

(PDI – July 25, 2002)

TENDER SALES

SEALED BID SALES

IMPORTED UNASSEMBLED 7260m² WAREHOUSE BUILDING WITH ADJUSTABLE DOCK LEVELERS AND BUILDING SERVICES

BUILDING - Pre-Engineered Structural Steel; Roof and Wall Insulation, Windows & Louvers, External Staircase, Purlins, Roll-up Doors, etc.
ELECTRICAL - ABB 3.75 MVA Substation Transformer; (4) ACME Delta 480/240 Transformers 112.5 KVA; ACME Delta 480/240 Transformer 75 KVA; (4) ACME Delta 480/240 Transformers 45 KVA; ACME Delta 480/240 Transformer 30 KVA; ACME Delta 480/240 Transformer 150 KVA; Load Interrupter Switches; (3) Current Transformers 300 5A15KV; (3) Potential Transformers 13.8/0.11KV; 100KVA UPS; Main Switch Boards, etc.
MECHANICAL - (6) YORK Handling Units; (2) ITT BELL & GOSETT; Condenser Water Pumps; Window/Split Type Air Conditioning Units, etc.
ARCHITECTURAL ITEMS - (9) RITE HITE Adjustable Dock Levelers, Steel Doors, etc.
MISCELLANEOUS - (4) 20' Office Containers; Demountable Office Building, etc.

AT: CLARKFIELD, ANGELES CITY, PAMPANGA, PHILIPPINES
ON VIEW: THURSDAY 25TH, FRIDAY 26TH & SATURDAY 27TH JULY 2002
TENDERS DUE: SATURDAY 27TH JULY 2002 - 12:00NOON

WALK-IN/ICE CREAM FREEZERS; MOTOR VEHICLES; FORKLIFT TRUCK; GENERATING SET, ETC.

WALK-IN/ICE CREAM FREEZERS - MASTER BILT Walk-In Freezer; (6) HUSSMAN DC16 Ice Cream Freezer/Dipping Cabinet (Unused); (18) HUSSMAN DC16; (2) DC12, (2) DC8, Ice Cream Freezer/Dipping Cabinets; (5) SCAN FROST SG15 Sliding Glass Freezers; GENERAL ELECTRIC Fridge/Freezer
MOTOR VEHICLES - MITUSBISHI L300 w/ Freezer Box; TOYOTA CROWN (1982)
FORKLIFT TRUCK - KOMATSU 1.5T Cap. LPG
MISCELLANEOUS - 25KVA Generating Set; 45KVA 3 Phase Transformer; FUJI Blower w/ 7.5KW Electric Motor; Grain Silo; SUPERIOR Cappuccino Coffee Machine; BAKERS AID Dough Retarder; Electric Hotdog Warmer

AT: KIFIL INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINES, INC.
FACILITY #7140 GIL. PUYAT AVENUE, CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE, CLARKFIELD, PAMPANGA, PHILIPPINES
ON VIEW: THURSDAY 25TH, FRIDAY 26TH & SATURDAY 27TH JULY 2002
TENDERS DUE: SATURDAY 27TH JULY 2002 - 12:00NOON

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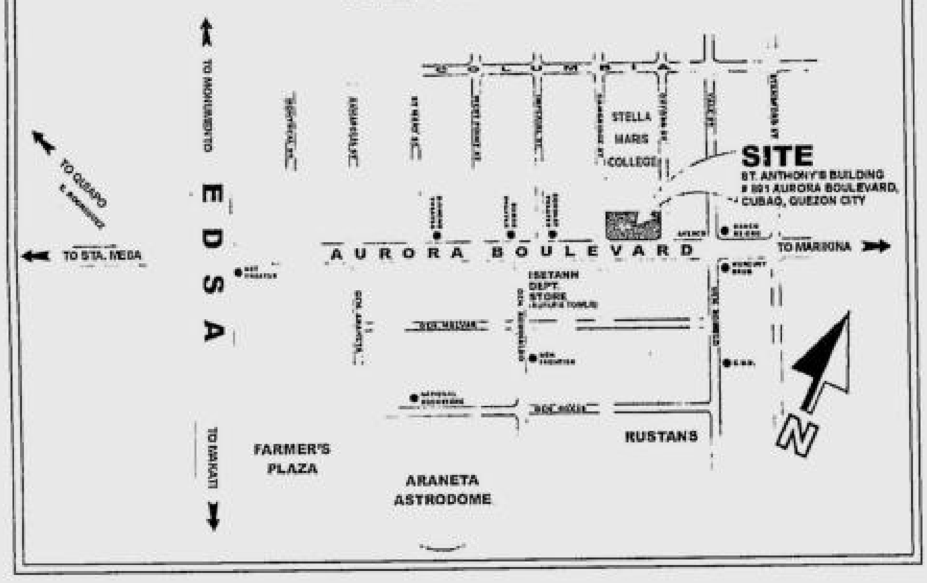

Our Dearly Beloved Daddy

SANTIAGO "Tiaging" B. GALANG SR.

Peacefully joined our Lord on July 21, 2002
at the age of 79.

His loving wife **Julie**; children **Willie** and **Vangie**, **Manny** and **Lanie**, **Santi** and **Marilu**, **Tina** and **Chito**, **Gene** and **Franco**, **Connie** and **Efren**, **Ludy** and **Eric**, **Marie** and **John**, **Rogie** and **Hazel**; grandchildren **Awing**, **Joel**, **Noel**, **Maan**, **Marivic**, **Mark**, **Dec-Dec**, **Mica**, **Chammy**, **Katrina**, **Jigo**, **Baby**, **Frances**, **Mara**, **Gian**, **Andrea**, **Leandro**, **Klarissa**, **Marika**, **Abby**, **Tricia**, **Margarita**, **Luis**, **Miguel**, **Gabby**; and great grandchild **Sophia** and relatives thank everyone who offered their prayers for the triumphant union of his soul with the Father.

His body lies in state at La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

A Concelebrated Mass will be offered at 9:00 a.m., Saturday, July 27, 2002 at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish Church, 13th Avenue, Cubao, Quezon City.

Interment follows at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

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ERNESTO C. MANGANTI

Peacefully joined his Creator on July 22, 2002
at the age of 71.

His bereaved loving wife **ADELINA**; brothers and sisters; children **ARNEL** and **TERESITA** and grandchildren **EMMANUEL**, **JUAN JULIO** and **MONICA** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at New San Jose Dinalupihan Bataan. He will be laid to rest in Gate to Heaven Cemetery after the 3 p.m. Funeral Mass at St. John the Baptist Church on Saturday, July 27, 2002.

"Therefore my heart is glad and my soul rejoices, my body, too, abides in confidence; Because you will not abandon my soul to the netherworld, nor will you suffer your faithful one to undergo corruption." *Psalm 16:7-8*

ARTURO A. ARDEÑA, M.D. SPCS

July 18, 1933 - July 19, 2002

Survived by his wife **Gilda**; children **Pauline** and **Dennis**, **Arlene** and **Lee**, **Darlene** and **Freddy**, **Paul**, **Jelyn**, and **Greg**; grandchildren **Kathleen**, **Jethro**, **Argyll**, **Agatha**, **Thom**, **Ivee**, **Dericka**, **Fred Dominic**, and **Danica**.

His remains lie in state at the St. Joseph's Community Church, Hall 1, San Isidro, Jaro, Iloilo City.

Interment will be on Saturday, July 27, 2002 at Forest Lake Cemetery after the interment mass at Spousal of Our Lady Parish, Mandurriao, Iloilo City at 9:00 a.m.

MOTORING

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

Motorbike industry rolls on despite 'anemic' mass appeal

By Tessa R. Salazar

YOU would think that with Indonesia's 2.5-million market demand for motorcycles yearly, Thailand's 1 million and Vietnam's 1.9 million, the motorcycle is truly a preferred Asian vehicle. But when you look at the Philippines' market demand for motorcycles—a "measly" 200,000 per year—you wonder why bikes have never gained a firm foothold here, or why it seems they still won't be widely accepted in the foreseeable future (statistics show market demand here is growing by only 10 percent).

It will take five years for that demand to reach 300,000, predicted Benedict Martin T. Arreola, marketing manager of Suzuki Philippines Inc. By then, Indonesia would already have had at least 12 million of its own bikes buzzing around its roads, and 10 million for Vietnam.

The Philippine population is close to Thailand's (82 million and 67 million, respectively), but in terms of ratio for motorcycles, Thailand has four persons for every motorcycle, while the Philippines has 80 persons for every motorcycle.

Unique market

The motorcycle awareness in the country is still starting up, said Ager Kiocho of the Motorcycle Development Program Participants Association's marketing committee. Kiocho, who is also Honda Philippines' assistant vice president for marketing, added that the Philippine market is unique because motorcycles here are mostly used for business such as tricycles and delivery bikes.

Despite this still small market demand for motorcycles, various motorcycles have been introduced recently. MDPPA members like Honda, Kawasaki, Yamaha, Suzuki and Kymco have been launching model units one after the other.

Surprising trend

There is, however, a surprising trend in the country's bike sales, and it is one that bike dealers are pinning their hopes on. Sales of bike for "solo" use are picking up. In 2001, 70 percent of all motorbikes sold were converted into public transport such as tricycles, the rest bought for private use. This year, the trend represents a complete reversal. Seventy percent of bikes being sold today are for solo use, and only 30 percent for tricycles, noted Arreola.

Mateo Ocenar, marketing committee head of the MDPPA, however, begged to disagree, stressing that the ratio remains the same. He said, however, that the awareness level of solo motorcycles as an alternative form of transport is increasing. He said the 70-30 percent ratio with 30 percent for private use was a big improvement already. In the 1990s, the solo motorcycle market stood at only 14 percent. In 1996, it climbed up to 21 percent. Today, it stands exactly at 32 percent.

Ocenar cited that aside from the increasing awareness level for motorcycle as an alternative private transport, there is also the limitation of business franchise for tricycles' permit to operate, as well as the crowding of tricycles with the same number of passengers.

"Tricycle drivers used to earn P500 a day but now the drivers earn roughly about P100 to P200 a day," he said. Ocenar estimated that the whole tricycle assembly costs P80,000. Motorcycles for tricycles cost about P65,000 and the side car ranges from P15,000 to P35,000.

Increased private use

The trend for increased private use is understandable and explainable, and is seen as a good sign for motorcycle manufacturers and dealers. For them, this only means more people are becoming aware that motorcycles are viable means of alternative personal transport.

Motorcycle companies fear, however, that when Filipinos are ready to buy their first motorbikes, they'll turn somewhere else and favor the lowest bidder. They face stiff competition not only among themselves but also from the influx of bikes manufactured in China, which automatically brings to mind low prices, never mind the quality of production.

Estimated prices of Chinese-made motorbikes are P30,000 for the 100 cc; P35,000, 110 cc; and P37,000, 125 cc.

"The influx of surplus motorcycles entering the country's 'backdoor' such as the Ilocos region hits the big disparity. Scooters there can be bought for as low as P5,000. Our own Raider, which is priced at P68,800, faces competitors priced less than 50 percent," Arreola said.

Value for every feature

"So what do manufacturers like us do? Come out with a motorcycle that has value for every feature."

Arreola said that although motorcycles like Raider offer value for every feature, the expected sales for this type of motorcycle would not be high as its target market is already thin to begin with. Expected sales performance for Raider is 150 per month.

Officials of Honda Philippines Inc., meanwhile, believe that launching quality bikes with affordable prices could rival sales for low-priced Chinese motorcycles. Chinese motorcycles are priced three times lower compared to typical Honda motorcycles. For this year alone, four Honda motorcycles were launched. This January, Honda launched two 110-cc motorcycles, XRM (P49,600) and Wave 110 (P54,900). This was followed by Wave 125-cc, which has been reportedly imitated by Chinese manufacturers.

Wave 125, an upgrade of Wave 110, costs P54,900. The launch was followed again by Wave Alpha 100 cc, geared to compete with its cheaper Chinese counterparts, and is priced at P39,800. The target markets for the Wave Alpha has been identified as employees who spend P200 a day for transportation fare and yet would need utmost mobility.

Still, the huge and erstwhile sleeping market giant that is the Philippines seems to be stirring. And the motorcycle industry is waiting for the millions to open their eyes to motorbikes.

AAP 'adopts' a street

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

"THE MAJORITY of the people wish to get on with the more important business of life and living," a full-page political advertisement in major newspapers asserted, among other things, last Sunday. That may be, but the majority of the people are stalled every day by traffic in the nation's urban centers, especially Metro Manila.

Our country's productivity and economic recovery are being undermined by the number of precious hours lost when people motoring or commuting to offices, schools and workplaces get stuck in traffic. Not to mention the spiraling cost of wasted fuel and the impact of frayed nerves and increased air pollution on public health.

But the government alone cannot solve the traffic problem. For our own good if not out of a sense of civic duty, those of us who are in the private sector should help the government address the traffic crisis before it overwhelms us entirely.

The Automobile Association Philippines (AAP, formerly Philippine Motor Association) is one private organization offering to help. A nonstock, nonprofit association of motorists founded 71 years ago, the AAP, as the national auto club, is the only organization in the Philippines affiliated with the Paris-based Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) and the Geneva-based Alliance Internationale de Tourisme (AIT). Over the years, aside from overseeing the local implementation of FIA standards and rules for motor sports, the AAP has cooperated with the government in various traffic-related projects that benefit the motoring as well as the commuting public.

The recent appointment of former Marikina City Mayor Bayani Fernando to the Metro Manila Development Authority's (MMDA) top post reenergized the AAP to volunteer its services for the improvement of traffic flow and safety on the road, especially for his plan to clear the streets of traffic obstructions.

"Signboards, posters and other forms of print advertising and campaign materials contribute to the distraction of drivers on the road," AAP executive director Johnny Angeles points out. "They do not have any traffic-redeeming value, yet these distracting materials are seen on almost every wall, fence, tree or lamppost. They not only cause drivers to turn their attention away from the road, they also clutter and add to the untidiness of our surroundings. Even worse, some of these distractions are placed on traffic signs and markings, further confusing motorists. By removing these hazards, we will reduce significantly the number of accidents on the road."

Consequently, earlier this month the AAP volunteered to "adopt" Aurora Boulevard and Marcos Highway (up to the Marikina-Rizal boundary) and make it the focus of the AAP's road safety objectives. The AAP wrote to Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte and Marikina City Mayor Ma. Lourdes Fernando, offering to assume the responsibility of removing road obstructions and nontraffic-related signs along Aurora Boulevard and keeping the thoroughfare's traffic signals and signs clean. Since the project area falls under their jurisdiction, the AAP is seeking the QC and Marikina mayors' approval and assistance for pertinent ordinances to help it carry out this responsibility on their behalf.

Meanwhile, the AAP has a pending proposal with Land Transportation Office Chief Roberto Lastimoso offering the AAP's national headquarters in Quezon City as the site for one of the LTO's driver's license renewal kiosks. Since the AAP has an excellent track record of cooperation with the LTO and has the necessary facilities and experience (AAP processes daily at least 100 applications for International Driver's Permits), Mr. Angeles is hopeful that the LTO will accept the offer. "By inviting the LTO to set up a driver's license renewal kiosk in our building, we can contribute to the LTO's goal of improving and fast-tracking the delivery of government services," he says.

Tied up with this offer is the AAP's proposal that the validity of licenses renewed at the AAP-located LTO license renewal kiosk be extended from three to five years, if the holder of the license being renewed qualifies. Under Sec. 23 of Republic Act 4136 (Land Transportation and Traffic Code), "any holder of a professional or nonprofessional driver's license who has not committed any violations during the three-year period shall be entitled to a renewal of such license for a five-year period." But as another precondition for this extension, the AAP may require the license holder to attend a free one-hour AAP seminar on safe, efficient and law-abiding driving techniques.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: It's time to pull over and change the air in your head.

* * *

E-mail comments to asevilla@inquirer.com.ph.

Motorshow joins Asean auto support conference

By Jun Alano

MOTORSHOW International (Philippines) reaffirmed its status as the country's premier auto and cycle exhibition recently when it took part in the 4th Conference on Asean Auto Supporting Industries, organized by the Japan External Trade Organization (Jetro) at the World Trade Center Metro Manila.

The conference, attended by leaders of Japan's top automotive companies, was aimed at nurturing automotive-related supporting industries in the Asean region, expand local procurement of parts by Japanese-affiliated automobile and parts/components manufacturers in the region, and enhance investment and technology exchanges between the Japanese manufacturers and Asean suppliers.

Aside from Motorshow, the Philippines was also represented by parts and components manufacturers like Mitusba Corp., Furukawa Electric Co. Ltd. and Sumitomo Electric Industries Ltd.

Motorshow director general Marisa Nallana said Motorshow was invited in the prestigious conference by virtue of its long-standing commitment and support to the auto industry, having been the favored motoring exhibit by automakers in the Philippines since 1989.

Also during the conference and exhibit, Toyota Motor Corp., Mazda Motor Corp., Nissan Motor Co. Ltd., Honda Motor Co. Ltd. and Mitsubishi Motors Corp. were represented by officials from their main offices in Japan.

Co-organizer Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association Inc., which groups Daihatsu Motor Co. Ltd., Fuji Heavy Industries Ltd., General Motors Japan, Hino Motors Ltd., Isuzu Motors Ltd., Nissan Diesel Motor Co. Ltd. and Suzuki Motor Corp., was also an active participant in the conference.

Other co-organizers of the two-day event are the Asean Automotive Federation and the Japan Auto Parts Industries Association.

The first such industry conference was held in Bangkok, Thailand in March 1997 while the second was in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in July 1998. The last conference was in Jakarta, Indonesia in July, 2000.

RPN AUTO EXTREME AUTO BYTES

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Each week, a viewer's question related to cars and motoring gets answered on Auto Extreme. You can get a hard copy every Thursday in the Motoring section of the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

What is the difference between an OEM piston and a forged piston? —*Andrew Olandez*

MOST OEM or original equipment pistons are manufactured through casting. That is, by pouring a liquid or molten aluminum-silicon alloy into a mold. Forged pistons use a solid ingot or billet that is stamped into shape.

What difference does that make? For one thing, although standard cast pistons can be very strong and light, in high performance situations a cast piston is more likely to shatter and damage the rest of the engine. Forged pistons tend to be stronger at high temperatures because they dissipate heat better and run cooler than cast pistons.

However, because of manufacturing procedures, forged pistons are much more expensive. The big advantage that makes them worth their price is that forged pistons have a more supple or ductile material that can take a higher level of detonation or abnormal combustion before failing. In extremely high rpm or high horsepower applications, the strength of the forged piston is far more reliable.

But then again, if you're just building a mildly supercharged engine that's tuned well enough not to detonate in the first place, then there's really no point in blowing all that money on a forged piston.

Of course, different engine designers have their own opinions as to what power level it becomes necessary to change from a conventional cast piston to a forged one. But it would be safe to say that once power levels rise past about 80 horsepower per liter of engine capacity, then a forged piston becomes worth it.

NISSAN MOTOR

Straightening up and moving forward

By Charles E. Buban

CHANGES can happen so fast. Still remember the woes Nissan Motor Co. had been into just a few years ago? The Japanese-French carmaker was losing money every year but one in the '90s and was on the brink of insolvency for having accumulated a debt that reached more than $11 billion. But these things are quite forgotten now, thanks largely to a Brazilian-French named Carlos Ghosn.

Known as *le cost killer* from his days as chief operating officer at Renault (the French carmaker bought a controlling stake in the Japanese company in 1999), Ghosn engineered the turnaround at Nissan with his scrap-and-build philosophy. The Nissan president and CEO's first task was to trim down the company—a process that eliminated 21,000 jobs and closed down five factories—and demand 20 percent savings from suppliers.

The bold strategy resulted in a dramatic reversal of Nissan's fortunes. From a loss of $5.7 billion two years ago, Nissan posted a record net profit of nearly $3 billion for the fiscal year ending March 2002—a 12 percent increase over the previous year. While he achieved this feat by shrinking the company, streamlining operations, paying down debt and getting price concessions from suppliers, he now looks on to the next challenge: boost Nissan sales worldwide.

Sales must rise soon

Perhaps, this is where the real challenge begins. Although Nissan's worldwide sales grew to $49.6 billion (less than 2 percent), this figure must rise soon and should keep on rising for Nissan to realize its revival and reclaim lost grounds. Says Elizabeth Lee, SVP-Marketing Group of Universal Motors Corp., assembler and distributor of Nissan's light commercial vehicles and sports utility vehicles here in the Philippines: "Nissan is actually seeing a lot better now: Ghosn's Nissan Revival Plan has turned around the company one year ahead of his self-imposed deadline. However, to boost Nissan profit and sales, Ghosn cannot just depend on cost cutting alone. His new plan, the Nissan 180, should address this next challenge."

The Nissan 180 plan is Ghosn's mission to boost Nissan's overall vehicle unit sales by 1 million in three years (from 2.5 million last year to 3.5 by 2005). To accomplish this mission in Asia, Ghosn conferred with various NMC partners in the region, including the Philippines, to discuss how to go about the plan. Tagging along with him were fellow NMC top brass like EVP Norio Matsumura and SVP Toshiyuki Shiga. Ghosn met with UMC president Richard Lee, SVP for marketing Elizabeth Lee, SVP-Finance Rodrigo Janeo Jr. and director Bryan Lee.

For its part, UMC plans to extend its product lines and introduce more competitive multipurpose and sport-utility vehicles to further boost Nissan's share in the country's commercial vehicle market. "During his short visit here, Ghosn discussed his plan to expand the Nissan LCV model lineup. The demand in this segment is growing which is a reflection of what's happening elsewhere, especially in the US," reports Lee.

Bouyed by the strong market presence of Nissan LCVs in the segments served by UMC, Ghosn expressed confidence that an expanded commercial vehicle lineup will improve Nissan's market share in the Philippines and contribute to his global 180 plan. "In fact, UMC supplies 70 percent of all the commercial vehicles sold nationwide. Ghosn knows this and he expressed full confidence in the Philippine auto industry," says Lee.

For two consecutive years, Nissan Frontier has enjoyed the top position in the pickup segment in the Philippines and continues to hold on to such post as of the first semester of 2002. The Urvan models, on the other hand, have also registered a robust 25 percent growth over the first semester last year and are holding on to the second spot in the van segment this year."

Recognition

Another reason for Ghosn's short visit here is to confer on UMC the inaugural Executive Vice President Award from Nissan for the company's record-breaking sales performance. UMC is the only Nissan distributor in Asia, from among over 100 members on the Nissan Global Network, to be awarded this distinction. Other countries to be honored this October in Tokyo are Canada, Italy, Brazil, Algeria and USA (Hawaii).

Lee saw a growing demand for sportier and even more luxurious SUVs like the Nissan Xterra and the Infiniti QX4 and similar models. To address another segment, Lee reveals that UMC is also planning to come out soon with its own Asian utility vehicle model to be based on the current pickup platform (the D22). "We believe the market is ready for them and demands will increase in the coming years," hopes Lee.

Globally, Nissan is preparing to launch 28 new models—from luxury SUVs such as the Infinity FX45 to US-size pickup trucks and budget subcompacts in the next three years. For Ghosn, he is giving himself until 2005 to accomplish all these things when he is scheduled to leave Nissan to take on the post of super-CEO who will oversee both Nissan and Renault affairs.

With the way Ghosn is steering Nissan these days he seems to be headed in the right direction, making his admirers believe that Nissan has indeed returned to the ring to challenge its competition head on.

Honda makes move in China; Fernando writes

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

HONDA has jumped the gun on its chief rivals from Asia. It is going to build the first car-exporting plant in China. The new plant hopes to roll out as many as 50,000 vehicles a year, starting in 2004.

Hiroyuki Yoshino, the president of Honda Motor of Japan, said the quality of cars built at the China plant would match those made in Japan. Which means, they'd be of world-class quality.

The move would cut production costs for Honda. Labor, as we all know, has become a bargain in China. The China venture would cut Honda's production costs to 20 percent.

James Brooke of the New York Times wrote: "The announcement comes at a time when all of Japan's five largest automakers have unveiled ambitious plans to expand production in China and serve the rapidly growing domestic market there, augmenting or replacing cars they now ship from Japan."

With Honda's move, analysts said the new Japanese investments could make China a car-exporting power by 2010.

* * *

Honda is not new to the China car market. It already produces 60,000 vehicles a year in China but only for local sale.

During the recent Beijing auto show, Honda officials said they planned to double that output by next March at its existing plant in Guangzhou.

Already being built there are Honda's best-selling Accord sedans and Odyssey minivans. Officials said the new export plant would probably be built in the Guangzhou area.

The new Honda venture is another proof of China's emerging role as the world's major target for investments. The capitalist atmosphere there has forced superpowers to retrain their guns on economic prospects. China's potential is anchored mainly on its billion-plus population.

* * *

I understand Isuzu Philippine Corp. (IPC) has recently launched the New Crosswind XUVi. With the success of its previous XUV and XTRM, plus the blockbuster performance of Crosswind, Isuzu will find it easy to score another smashing success.

As I keep saying, when it comes to diesel, Isuzu is unbeatable.

Take a bow, Art B. You too, Timmy N. Koyasu-san might suddenly surprise you with a salary raise.

* * *

Bayani F. Fernando, the new MMDA chair, wrote to say "there are no trees in the middle of streets" in reaction to my column here on June 27. The piece dealt with a newspaper report about Fernando's plan to cut trees as part of his plan to ease traffic in the metropolis. Below is his unedited letter.

"Please be informed that the trees being mentioned are those that block the free flow of pedestrians along the sidewalk. Indeed, there are no trees in the middle of streets, but I believe you will agree that when pedestrians are forced to walk in the middle of the street because of a tree or any obstruction blocking the sidewalk, there will be increased road friction. I hope you will also agree, in this case, that such obstruction must be removed. One such obstruction is the 'aratiles' tree that was removed from the sidewalk at the Edsa-Kamuning area. Sidewalks are for people and must be kept unobstructed at all times. This, we are determined to do.

"On our traffic personnel not really enforcing traffic laws, this is a sweeping statement and would redound to the morale of our field personnel. I am not saying that we are free from 'rotten apples' but measures are being made to eradicate these nefarious individuals among the rank of our proud traffic officers."

In other cities like Tokyo, New York and Paris, many of their sidewalks have trees. That's because these trees were planted for a purpose—either for shade or esthetic reasons. Environmental reasons, even.

With due respect, no I don't agree. "Road friction will not be increased" if I walk on the street to avoid a tree.

By the way, what's road friction, sir?

No, I will not also agree that a tree is an obstruction if it was planted on a sidewalk. The person/s who planted it must have a logical reason for that. Like helping make our world green and clean?

We talk of obstruction and the real sidewalk obstructions I know are the *talipapas* and sidewalk vendors.

But trees as sidewalk obstructions?

I can avoid them but not the *talipapas* and sidewalk vendors.

Ask Loren Legarda.

* * *

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Deals Like These Won't Last Forever!

Local oil prices seen to increase

By Ronnel W. Domingo

LOCAL oil companies are projecting increases in the pump prices of oil products in the next two weeks due to almost a dollar per barrel rise in international crude prices.

Roberto Kanapi, Pilipinas Shell general manager for corporate affairs, said the average price of crude went up by 70 cents from $23.90 per barrel in June to $24.60 in the first 22 days of July.

"We may consider an increase in prices but we have to see what will happen in the remaining days of the month to determine how much the adjustment will be," Kanapi said in a telephone interview.

He said the foreign exchange rate was relatively stable but the crude cost was increasing.

The peso averaged at 50.43 to the dollar in June and that has yet to be considered.

Kanapi said this might mean that price increases could still be put off for next month "unless another oil firm declares one (an increase) ahead of Shell."

The Shell official said that was what happened in June when Shell had announced that price changes were expected in early July but had to take it back when Seaoil Petroleum Corp. jumped the gun.

The oil firms rolled back their prices of gasoline, diesel and kerosene by 35 centavos per liter late in June.

In a separate interview, Eastern Petroleum Corp. chair Fernando Martinez said prices could change in early August by 25-30 centavos per liter.

Martinez said local prices would reflect the fluctuations in international prices.

Under the industry rule of thumb, a dollar increase per barrel of crude entails a 34-centavo-per-liter increase in local prices. A P1 fall in the local currency would also require a 17-centavo adjustment in local oil prices.

"Considering current figures, prices should go up by 26 to 27 centavos per liter," the source said.

Meanwhile, consumer welfare advocate Raul Concepcion said in a briefing last week that local pump crises were expected to go up by 22 centavos per liter this month.

However, he said that oil companies might wait until next month to implement price changes.

SEC makes permanent CDO on Glasgow Credit

**By Elena R. Torrijos
and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.**

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has made permanent a cease-and-desist order on Glasgow Credit and Collection Services Inc. for alleged illegal sale of securities.

SEC officials held a hearing yesterday on Glasgow's case. During the hearing, the SEC informed Glasgow lawyers that their request for the lifting of the CDO, issued earlier this month, was denied.

Glasgow lawyers did not contest the SEC order making permanent the CDO since the company wanted an amicable settlement of the case.

Based on the investigation by the SEC's compliance and enforcement department, Glasgow issued securities to the public by promising investors monthly interest of 10 percent to 15 percent for a six-month placement. Upon signing of the contract with the investor, Glasgow issued seven post-dated checks to cover for six monthly interest payments and the principal.

In its CDO, the commission said its records showed that Glasgow did not register these securities with the SEC's corporation finance department and that the company was not licensed as an investment corporation in order to engage in such activity.

Glasgow was incorporated with the SEC just last May. Its primary purpose was "to make business of credit and collection services and other necessary or essential activities."

In the meantime, the Department of Trade and Industry has agreed to take the back seat and give the Securities and Exchange Commission full jurisdiction in the investigation of the investment fiasco involving Glasgow Credit and Collection Services Inc.

A government source said the DTI would only provide assistance to the SEC in the Glasgow case until it has been determined whether the controversial firm violated the Securities Act (which regulate the sale of investment instruments) or the Consumer case (which bans pyramiding schemes).

TWO traders show different expressions as trading goes on at the Philippine Stocks Exchange. Shares, led by telecom giant Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., closed lower yesterday as news of a high budget deficit in the first half of the year battered sentiment already depressed by US losses, traders said. REUTERS

The Circuit

NEW SHELL FUEL POWERS SCHUMACHER TO 2002 CHAMPIONSHIP VICTORY

A new fuel from Shell has helped power Michael Schumacher to his fifth Grand Prix Drivers' Championship this week-end, ensuring the continued dominance of the Ferrari team. The fuel, which was designed and developed through the close relationship between the Shell and Ferrari engineers has played a vital role in the team's race strategy and ultimately its Championship success.

With an unassailable lead over his nearest rival, Michael has won the Formula One Drivers' World Championship with six races to go. "Shell has again provided us with a fuel that gives the cars that little bit extra we are always looking for" said the World Champion. "So far this season, the car has been extremely responsive and much credit for this must go to the Ferrari and Shell engineers who have produced an engine and fuel system that work perfectly together."

The fuel gave Schumacher an improved fuel efficiency that allowed the car to run lighter, faster and enabled the Ferrari team to maximize Schumacher's pit-stops throughout the season. With the Ferrari team always looking for that extra edge over their competitors, Ferrari's team principal, Jean Todt said: "Shell's new fuel performed exactly as we had expected it to from our tests. Combined with the excellent tire performance, the extra efficiency this fuel provides gave us a larger pit-stop window, which is a significant advantage when planning pit-stop and race strategies. Ultimately there is no doubt it has helped Michael to the title." The success of the team is due in part to the strength of its partnerships, with Ferrari only ever working with partners who are at the very top of their field.

In Shell, they have a dedicated fuel and oil development team who consistently exceed the demands placed upon them, constantly helping to give Ferrari the edge over their rivals. Talking about the relationship between Shell and Ferrari, technical director Ross Brawn, said, "Shell has total access to our engine, our transmission and any part of the car they are involved in. They have total access to our designs and they work with our designers to find the best solutions." Ferrari is not the only winner from Shell's development programme. The same engineers who design and develop fuel and oil for the Formula One team also design and develop road fuels and lubricants, ensuring that lessons Shell learn from Formula One can benefit motorists filling up on Shell stations all over the world. Essentially, the fuels developed by Shell and used by millions of motorists across the planet have been tested by World Champion Michael Schumacher and the Ferrari Formula One team. With the Shell and Ferrari engineers working so closely together, the partnership can only improve, resulting in ever improving fuels and lubricants to power the Ferraris of Schumacher and Barrichello along with the cars of motorists all over the world.

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MONTOYA	34
BARRICHELLO	32
R. SCHUMACHER	32
COULTHARD	30
RAIKKONEN	17

TEAM STANDINGS	
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RENAULT	15
SAUBER	10
JORDAN	6

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KEY TO RECOVERY

PNB submits rehab plan

By Clarissa S. Batino

PHILIPPINE National Bank has submitted to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas a rehabilitation plan that sought to reduce the bank's huge non-performing loans and improve its profitability within the next five years.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura confirmed that the bank had submitted a rehabilitation plan but said he had not seen the plan yet. The plan has yet to be presented to the Monetary Board.

"In general terms, I think they'll have to address the need to turn the bank around within three to five years so the government can sell its stake and to enable the bank to pay its remaining obligations," said the central bank governor.

PNB has P6.1 billion worth of outstanding obligations to the government, which it has to settle within 10 years.

Buenaventura said the bank had been showing signs of improvement based on its first semester performance. In the first six months of the year, PNB incurred a net loss of P1.4 billion, which was 64.1 percent lower than the P3.9 billion in losses registered in the same period last year.

The country's sixth largest bank attributed the improvement in its first semester performance to the decline in interest expenses and administrative spending following the rationalization of its workforce and the relocation of certain branches to less expensive sites.

PNB president Lorenzo Tan told stockholders in May that the bank would strive to reduce its net loss this year to P2.9 billion from P4.1 billion in 2001 and P5.97 billion in 2000.

He also projected the decline in the bank's non-performing loans from more than half of its loan portfolio to 39 percent by the end of 2002.

The bank also attributed the improved financial performance to the signing of a memorandum of agreement between the government and the Lucio Tan group last May 3.

The two groups forged a P25-billion debt-to-equity swap agreement that would pave the way for the rehabilitation and financial recovery of the bank in the next five years. The agreement increased the government's ownership from 16 to 44.98 percent and reduced Tan's stake from 68 percent to 44.98 percent.

The agreement allowed the government to appoint Tan and other executives to run the bank.

Since the MOA signing, PNB said its net loss had dropped by 46 percent in May to P169 million from P313 million in the same month last year. In the same period, the bank's NPLs also declined by P2.3 billion to P50.3 billion from P52.6 billion, or to a ratio of 52 percent of total loan portfolio from 55 percent.

The bank said deposits had started to improve as its current and savings accounts grew to P53.7 billion from P51.9 billion.

Tan said the bank would launch a campaign to generate P15 billion in deposits in the coming months.

Children's Hour relaunch

WITH the success of the millennium campaign in 1999, proponents of Children's Hour have decided to relaunch the project on Aug. 14 at the Glorietta Activity Center.

The campaign, spearheaded by some of the country's biggest corporations and led this year by Ayala Foundation, appeals to working individuals and companies to donate at least an hour's worth of their earnings for the benefit of abused and disadvantaged children in the Philippines.

The relaunch is aimed at institutionalizing Children's Hour as a regular vehicle for raising funds for children.

This year's committee is chaired by Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II with Gina L. Lopez as vice chair. Committee members include Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez, Emily Abrera, Corazon Alma de Leon, Ramon R. del Rosario, Renato S. de Villa, Carols Dominguez, Susana A.S. Madrigal, Narcisa L. Escaler, Bob D. Gothong, Patricia B. Licuanan, Guillermo M. Luz, Justo A. Ortiz, Marianne G. Quebral, Pedro E. Roxas, Bienvenido A. Tan Jr., and Bishop Socrates Villegas. Former President Corazon C. Aquino is the Children's Hour's honorary chair.

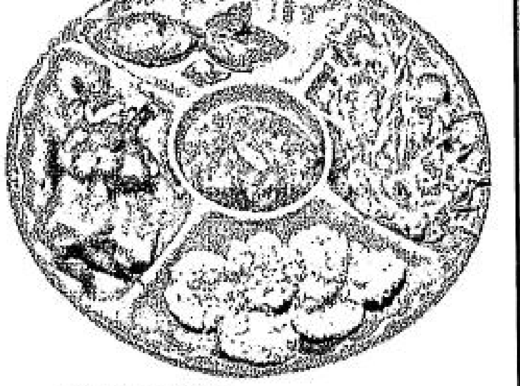
Since its launch, Children's Hour in the Philippines has been hailed by the International Youth Foundation, its global advocate, as one of the most successful campaigns in the world in terms of donations and marketing programs.

In less than six months, the Children's Hour campaign raised close to P40 million and benefited more than 88,000 children and youth.

(The Children's Hour secretariat can be contacted through Tel. Nos. 894-56-20 and 894-1663 and e-mail address childrenshour@ayala.com.ph.)

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

For feedback, text us at (0918)917-5026 or email us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph



A TASTE of Thai

Tongue-tied by new culinary experience

By Cathy Babao-Guballa
Photos by Roger Carpio

PUT together two women with a passion for good food and the arts, and what do you get? A culinary experience that will leave you tongue-tied.

Chef, teacher and food stylist Reggie Aspiras has teamed up with successful businesswoman Nelia Silverio-Dee to create Tongue Thai, one of the newest players in the Glorietta mall. Silverio-Dee is a former student of Aspiras. The two women have been friends for several years now. Both of them enjoy painting, cooking and shopping, among other things.

"She's one of my better students and does my craft justice," Aspiras says of Silverio-Dee. "Plus, it's hard to work with someone who doesn't share the same passion," she adds.

Both women describe Tongue Thai as "the hole in the wall that went the extra mile in terms of service, food and ambiance." And the crowd the 3-month-old restaurant draws regularly seems to indicate that the "extra mile" is greatly appreciated. Aspiras and Silverio-Dee appear to have developed a regular clientele that fill up every inch of the hole in the wall.

Located on what Silverio-Dee likes to call the "Asian street" of Glorietta, Tongue Thai stands side by side with restaurants that serve Chinese and Filipino food. But what sets the restaurant apart from the next Thai place is the fact that the food served here is not what you usually expect.

"We've put a twist to it. We serve classic Thai food but toyed around with it to make it more appealing to the Filipino palate. Plus, the entrées we serve here are not normally found in the other Thai restaurants," Aspiras explains.

Best sellers

However, she will also be the first to admit that Tongue Thai's top sellers are still the simple, familiar dishes that Thai food aficionados usually look for, such as Tom Yum Goong (spicy sour soup with baby tiger prawns), Phad Thai (stir fried noodles with shrimps, fried beancurd and caramelized walnuts) and Gai Bai Toey with Tod Man Goong (pandan chicken and fried shrimp cakes with *bagoong* rice, served with two sauces), among others. Serving portions are enough to satisfy two medium-sized appetites and reasonable at an

TONGUE-TIED/ p.C2

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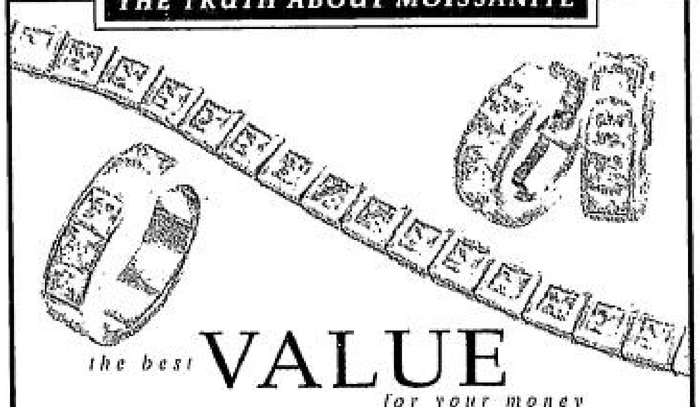

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Bakery & Bakeshop: Aug. 10 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Commercial methods used in preparing breads, pies and cakes including costing, production batching with actual hands-on. P1,500.
Pasta Cooking: Aug. 10 (Sat) 9 a.m. -1 p.m. Lasagna, Chicken Cannelloni; assorted pasta dishes and sauces (Garlic Fettucini, Carbonara, Putanesca, Pesto and Negra). Bonus: homemade pasta making. P700
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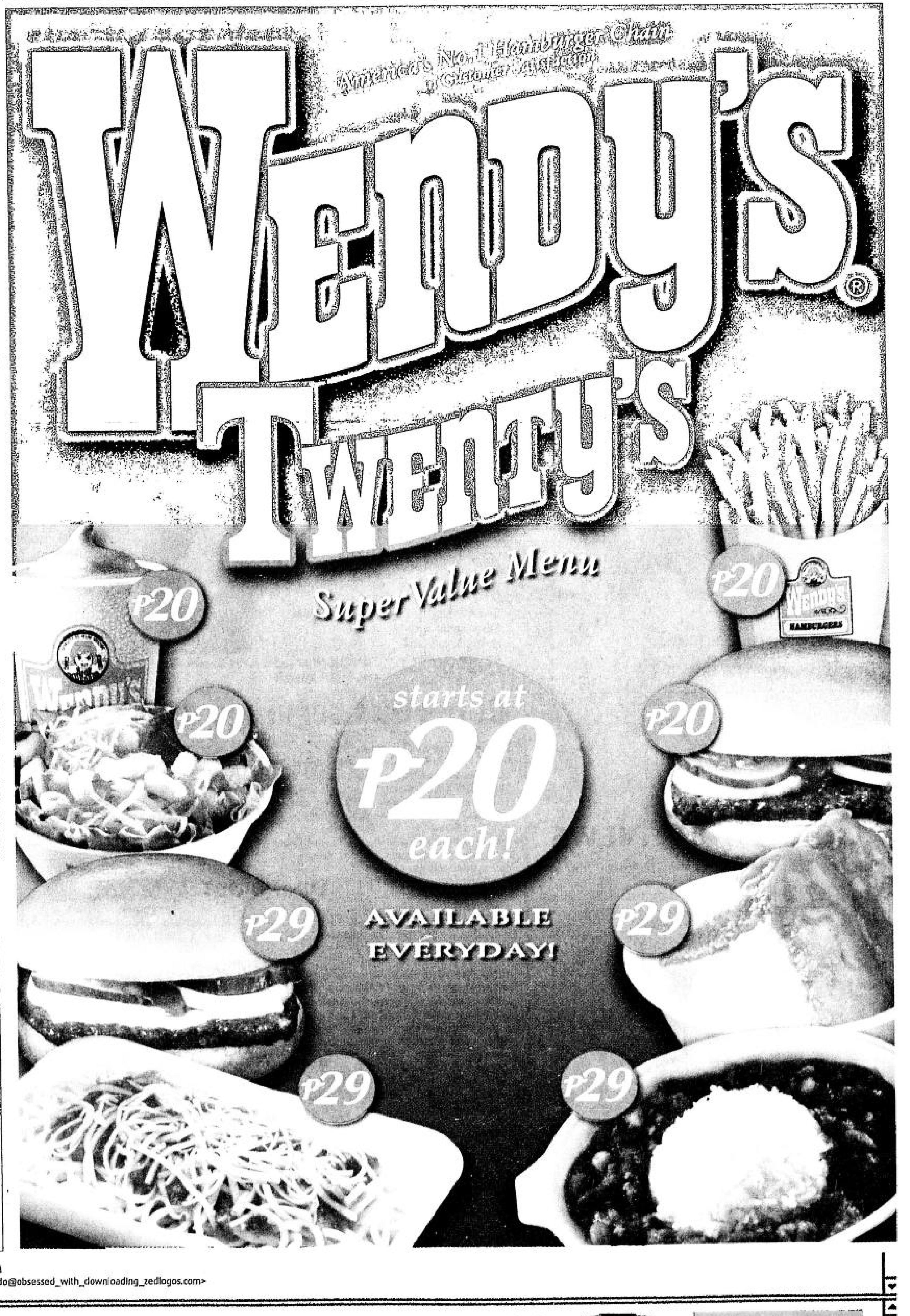

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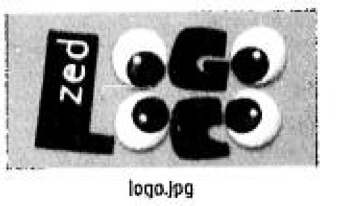

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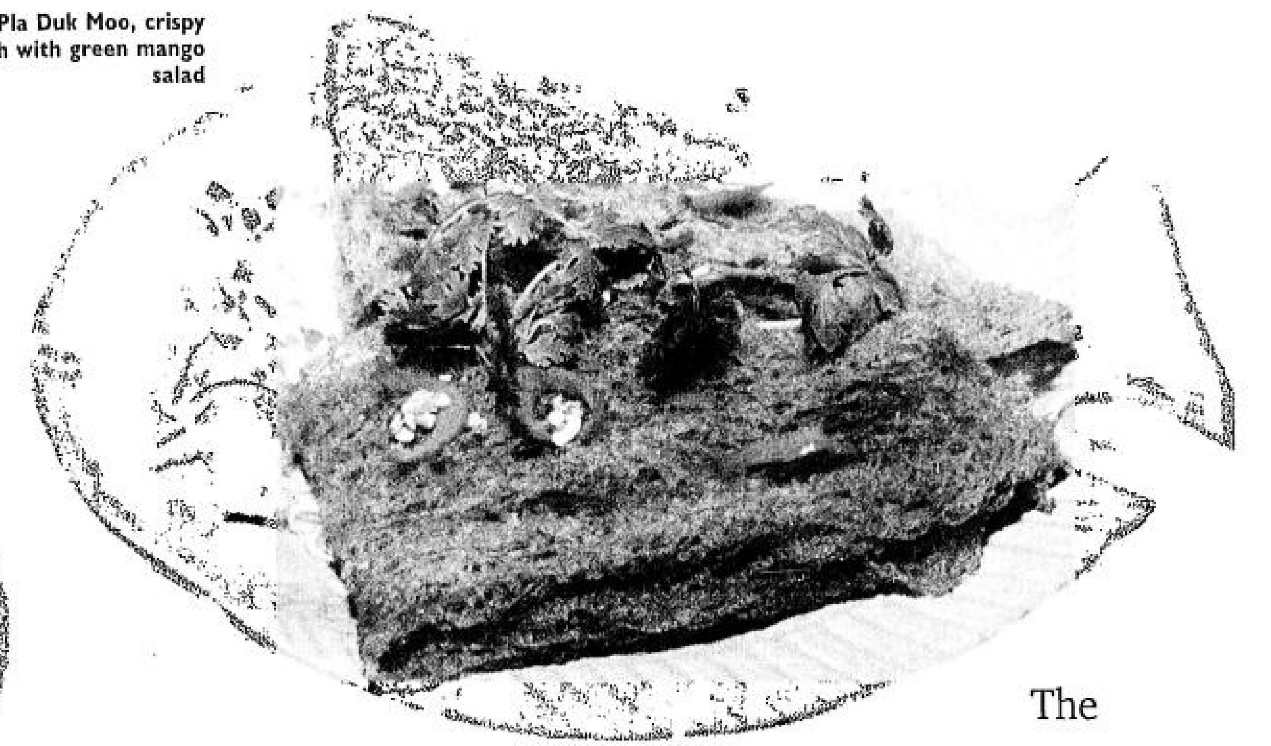
THAI Chicken Rice with three sauces



YAM Pla Duk Moo, crispy catfish with green mango salad

Tongue-tied by new culinary experience

The women have toyed around with classic Thai food to make it more appealing to the Filipino palate

From page C1

average price of P170 per dish.

The more adventurous palates can also discover other tongue-tying delights here. On a rainy day, spicy entrées such as the yellow chicken curry (rated one pepper), the red curry with roasted duck (two peppers) and the green prawn curry (three peppers!) are sure to delight those who go for really hot food. The Thai Chicken Rice is an interesting take on the Singaporean Hainanese Rice—it is white chicken with three sauces (ginger, soy and chili) and served with chicken-flavored rice.

On the day of the interview, we were hankering for Yam Pla Duk Moo (crispy catfish with green mango salad) and Tongue Thai's version met, even exceeded, our expectations! Yummy!

Meals here can start with the Spring Roll Platter, fried noodle and mushroom-stuffed spring roll with plum and mustard sauce, plus pork salad in fresh lettuce leaf cups with mint or coriander dressing; or A Taste of Thai, papaya salad, rice crackers with pork and shrimp dipping sauce and fried bean curd with satay sauce. At Tongue Thai, the appetizers, salads and soups are, in fact, filling enough for diners on a diet.

For those who do not have to count their calories, there is the wide array of main entrées to choose from. During the meal, one should ideally have a glass of Lemongrass Iced Tea to cool off and wash down the spices.

To round off a perfect meal, Tongue Thai offers several desserts like the classic sticky rice with ripe mangoes, a refreshing Tab Tim Grob (water chestnuts with *langka* and coconut milk), or Saku Piak (pandan tapioca with corn kernel and coconut cream).

The walls of this cozy "hole in the wall," which can seat 30 people comfortably, are adorned with huge photographs of various Thai ingredients—bell peppers, onion leeks, ginger.

Aspiras and Silverio-Dee say most of their patrons on weekdays are women who go to the mall to lunch or to shop. On weekends, the restaurant is filled mostly with families or couples out on a date. "Our dream is to put up two more outlets in the Metro Manila area so that we can share the unique dining experience with more people," the women revealed.

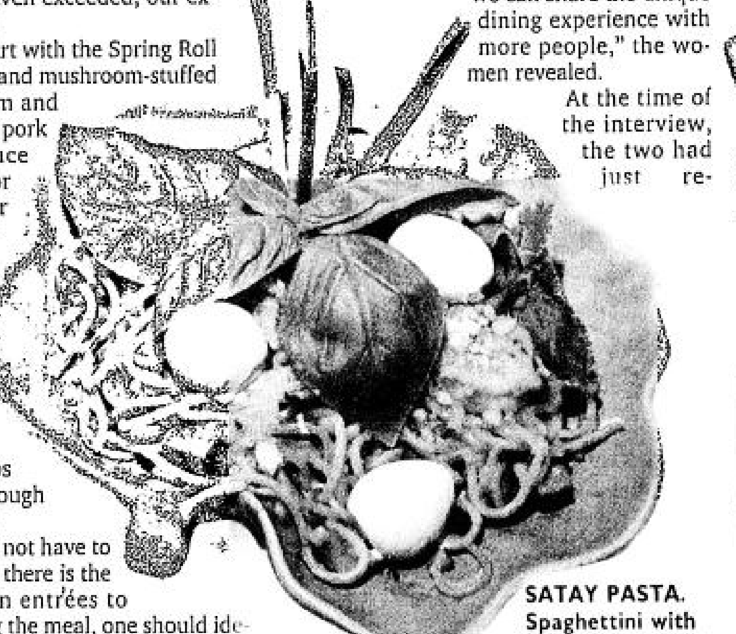
At the time of the interview, the two had just returned from a week-long visit to Bangkok and were looking forward to doing a cooking session in Tongue Thai's kitchen.

"The best thing about Nelia is that she never puts me on a budget, but she also stops me when I go overboard," Aspiras says laughing. "You're always overboard," Silverio-Dee teases.

We left the two friends to continue their culinary exploits, which will hopefully result in more tongue-tying dishes.

Tongue Thai is located in Glorietta 1 at the Ayala Center.

E-mail the author at cbguballa@ inquirer. com.ph



SATAY PASTA. Spaghettini with shrimps, tofu and chicken in satay sauce

STIR-FRIED Vegetable, Thai style

TONGUE Thai ladies Nelia Silverio-Dee and Reggie Aspiras

"HOLE in the wall that went the extra mile."

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Generous servings of Italian-American meals

DINING OUT

ITALIANNI'S Bakery Café at the Alabang Town Center now offers not only single-serve dishes, but also some big portions meant for sharing. Meals start with complimentary foccacia and Tuscan bread dip in herb oil and balsamic vinegar or appetizers Spinach and Artichoke Formaggio and Stuffed Mushroom. The best-selling entrées are Roasted Chicken Italianni's, Grilled Pork Chops Au Pouvre and Eggplant Parmagiana. Also try the new pasta selections of Angel Hair Mediterraneo and Fettuccine Carbonara. Wash these down with refillable iced tea, soda or lemonade. New York-style Cheesecake, Tiramisu and Tartufo are great with Frappe Mocha. Call 772-3320/3385.

ANTONELLI'S Café Ristorante's weekday buffet features Create Your Own Pasta Dish and Pizza and Salad Bar. Savor appetizers, cheeses, cold cuts and antipasta. Special soup is also available daily, together with meat, poultry and seafood dishes. Desserts include fresh fruits. Come in a group of eight and pay for only seven. Weekday buffet is available 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. and 6:30-9:30 p.m. Call 816-6853, 844-0637/0639. Antonelli's Café Ristorante is at 177 Yakal St., San Antonio, Makati City.

DUSIT Hotel's Thien Duong Restaurant offers executive lunch menus, Monday to Friday. The new menus include: Set I—chicken and transparent vermicelli soup, deep-fried fillet of sole with toasted peanuts and spicy lemon grass dip or northern barbecued pork and Longan pudding; Set II—Vietnamese Fisherman's Soup with prawns, mussels, fish and mushrooms, charcoal-grilled chicken served with deep-fried glutinous rice or slices of pork or beef barbecue served on a bed of rice noodles with coconut flan with caramel. Call 867-3333 local 3354 and 3357.

EDSA SHANGRI-LA'S Paparazzi offers à la carte game delights for dinner until Aug. 3. There's Deer Carpaccio with Lobster, Oyster and Angel Hair; Venison Fillet with Currant and Horseradish Sauce; Garganelli with Wild Boar and Provolone. Set dinner includes Honey-Glazed Quail/Ravioli with Parma Ham, Goose Breast and Liver/Deer Medallion with Blueberry Marmalade. Call 633-8888 local 2738 or 2739

HYATT REGENCY MANILA'S *sushi matsuri* sails at Tempura Misono until July 31. Savor sushi and sashimi varieties such as Shake (Salmon), Maguro (Tuna), Hamachi (Yellow Tail), Ika (Squid), Ikura (Salmon Roe), Kanibo (Crabstick) and Toro (Tuna Belly). Sushi boats include *nigiri sushi* (rice toppings) and *makimono* (bamboo mat roll). Available for 2-8 persons, with a complimentary round of *sake*.

THE PENINSULA MANILA'S Old Manila's new menu presents the finest in fusion. Appetizers include Salmon and Nori with Soba Noodles Salad, Tempura and Miso dressing. There are also vegetarian dishes such as Braised Vegetables in Coconut and Thai Green Curry and Tomato Confit and Grilled Fennel Risotto. Also available are Pan-fried Tenderloin with Foie Gras and Truffle Sauce, Roast Duck Breast with Morrels, Braised Shallots, Savoy Cabbage and Beetroot with Risotto with Duck Confit. Cap off your meals with fresh fruit minestrone with champagne and lime sorbet, while chocolate banana samosas with yogurt-vanilla sauce. Call 887-2888 local 2953, 2949 or 2205.

THE WESTIN PHILIPPINE PLAZA offers international specialties at Cafe Plaza, authentic Italian fare including a fine selection of wines at Alfiere Italian Bistro, and Cantonese specialties at China Sea Restaurant. Dine in any of these restaurants until Aug. 31 and get a chance to win a trip to Australia. Every single receipt of food and beverage charges worth P1,000 entitles you to one raffle coupon and a chance to win three days and two nights' vacation package for two to Sydney, Australia. Call 551-5555.

MANILA MIDTOWN Hotel's Vogue Coffeeshop offers flavorful dishes until Aug 4, like Pacific Seafood Chowder, Fish Fillet with Tomato Basil Sauce, Lamb Stew with Chive, Baked Scallops in Cream and Cheese Sauce and Pan-fried Medallion with Forest Mushroom. There's also a special corner for Japanese food and noodle lovers. Call 526-7001 local 6554.

SAISAKI, Manila's first Japanese restaurant to offer buffets with over 100 Japanese specialties, offers another exciting buffet festival, the Niku Matsuri (Meat Festival). Aside from the "mainstay" buffet dishes, it features succulent meat ingredients such as bacon, ham, chicken, beef or hotdog in various unique preparations. The Niku selection is an assortment of these ingredients wrapped in sushi rice or mixed with fresh fruit and vegetables. The buffet price ranges from P360 (for weekdays) and P450 (for weekends and dinner). Niku Matsuri starts this August and will run until October at all Saisaki branches at Glorietta 3, Alabang Town Center, Pasay Road, SM Megamall, Edsa and West Avenue. Call 532-3004.

TASTEMAKERS

New places, grand raffle and ultimate food show

HOT GAMES AND COOL CARS
PRESTIGE Cars Libis launched recently Zeno bar and lounge in an event called "Las Vegas Night," which featured gaming facilities from Casino Filipino. Aside from betting on the roulette wheel, guests also tried their luck on the baccarat and black jack tables and slot machines. Guests were given a starting capital of 500 worth of chips, which they exchanged for BMW items and packages from Zeno. Photo shows Prestige Cars Libis president Tony Aquino (third from left) with former congressman Hermie Aquino, Lito German and Prestige's women executives. Zeno is at 184 E. Rodriguez Avenue, Quezon City.

NEW JAPANESE RESTO IN SAN JUAN
SUMOS Sushi Bar and Restaurant opened recently at 103 J. Abad Santos corner L. Jaena, Little Baguio, San Juan. Photo shows (L-R) Mely Lim, Ivy Violan, Ivan Sy and San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito during the ribbon cutting ceremonies.

RAFFLE CAPS RESTO CELEBRATION
CHATEAU 1771 Ortigas Center held its Oz Trip grand draw during the Grand Australian Revelry, which featured musical numbers, and a mini-exhibit of Australian products, food and wines. The winner received a round-trip ticket for two to Adelaide, Australia, with three days and two nights' hotel accommodation. Photo shows Chateau 1771 chief executive officer Ricky Gutierrez (third from right) with (from left) Mike Kaluag, president of Portico-Malate; RJ Estaban, president, Chateau 1771; Mark Visser, senior trade commissioner, Austrade; Tony Melville, Australian Embassy chief of mission; Honeybee Hubahib, Qantas Airways Limited country manager; and Floretta Sevilla, president, Australian Wine & Food Company.

Best-selling cookbook now in its fourth printing

A Cookbook of 180
The Best of
FOOD
Magazine

DUE to public demand, "The Best of Food Magazine," ABS-CBN Publishing Inc.'s best-selling cookbook, is now available again in bookstores and newsstands nationwide. A consistent bestseller since it was first published last year, "The Best of Food Magazine" is now in its fourth printing.

The cookbook features kitchen-tested recipes that are doable, cook-friendly and delicious, depicted in color photographs of expertly styled dishes, in an attractive design and layout at a price lower than most imported glossy magazines.

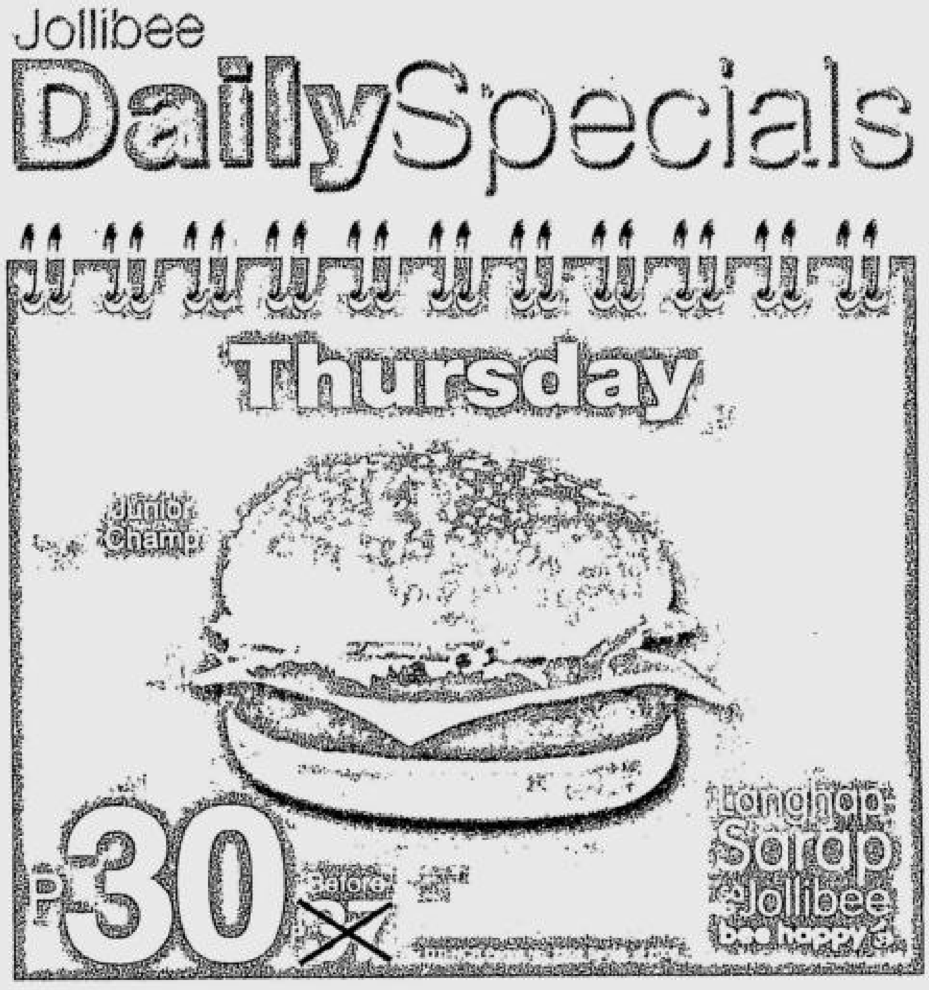
Many of the recipes were contributed by celebrities and other known personalities in the arts, the diplomatic circle, politics, the culinary field, business and entertainment. Other contributors are ordinary people who developed their own delicious recipes or inherited these from friends and family.

Recipe contributors include Corazon Aquino with Maur Lichauco, Margie Moran Florendo, Lizzie Zobel, Eli and Cecile Aurelio, Alice and Alya Honasan, Lisa Ongpin Periquet, Gloria Diaz, Andrea Domingo, Edsel Moscoso, Maritel Nievera, Beth Romualdez, Estee and Peter Wallace, Jessie Sincioco, Eufemia Estrada, Virginia Moreno, Josefina Reyes-Concepcion, Boots Anson Roa, Mons Romulo Tantoco, Sandy Daza, Leonor Kilayko, Raul Sunico, Loudette Dayrit, Trina Yujuico Kalaw, Rikki and Beng Dee, Joan Hubbard, Ivi Avellana Cosio, Dorothy Ferreria, Gina Navarro, Dodi Torres and Suzette Montinola.

The various bookstores and magazine outlets report that the buying public continues to patronize this best-selling cookbook, with peak sales noted during special occasions when several copies are bought as gifts for loved ones, or as *pasalubong* for *balikbayans*.

Readers who have tried the recipes for appetizers, soups, salads and side dishes, pastas, vegetables and beans, pork/beef/poultry dishes and desserts report that these have become family favorites.

GET INTO THE SPIRITS
SPIRITS Malate Coyote Bar recently opened at the corner of Nakpil and Jorge Bocobo Streets with drinking contests, performances and bar girls dancing on bars. At this latest and hottest bar, female bartenders make their rounds and perform choreographed numbers while they serve your favorite drinks. Some of the VIPs present during the inauguration were (L-R) Trisha Mesina, Sharmaine Cruz and Mae Timonera of Nestle Philippines and Spirits VP Michael Lina and his wife, Joanne Lina, the bar's marketing director.



Food exhibit and catering seminars set

THE FOOD Caterers Association of the Philippines, with Nestle Philippines and Audio Compulsion, will feature table setup exhibit, fondant cake exhibit, booth exhibit and seminars on the food catering industry, food sampling and Parada ng Lechon at the World Trade Center, Manila, on Aug. 2-4. Dubbed "Taste of Manila at the World's Food and Trade Show 2002," the participating caterers and suppliers are Swan Catering Services Corp., CVJ, Josiah's, Better Pan, Beverly's, Hizon's, Auffrance, Kusina ni Kambal, Tamayo's, Robert Camba's, Center Table, VS and F, Jack n Jenn Catering, Al Navarro's and Delica Catering.

New creamy confections

THE ORIGINAL Javanilla, a mound of ice cream with a shot of espresso, has always been a favorite of coffee drinkers at Seattle's Best Coffee.

Now, SBC has come up with a delightful version of the Javanilla that's entirely ice cream without the coffee, obviously meant for a very young market, especially the kids, as well as for non-coffee drinkers who wish to enjoy a refreshing drink alternative within the ambience of a coffee shop.

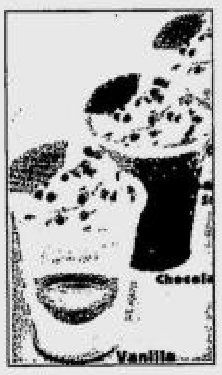
The new Javanilla creamy milkshake comes in three flavors, the perennial favorite chocolate, strawberry and vanilla, and may be ordered in two sizes—tall (P95) and grande (P125).

The Vanilla Shake has a rich blend of pure vanilla ice cream and SBC premium white chocolate mix topped with whipped cream, chocolate chips and waffle quarter.

The Chocolate Shake is a tempting combination of rich chocolate mix topped with whipped cream, chocolate chips and waffle quarter.

The Strawberry Shake is a fruity blend of strawberry ice cream and SBC premium white chocolate mix topped with whipped cream, chocolate chips and waffle quarter.

The shakes are all 100-percent caffeine-free.



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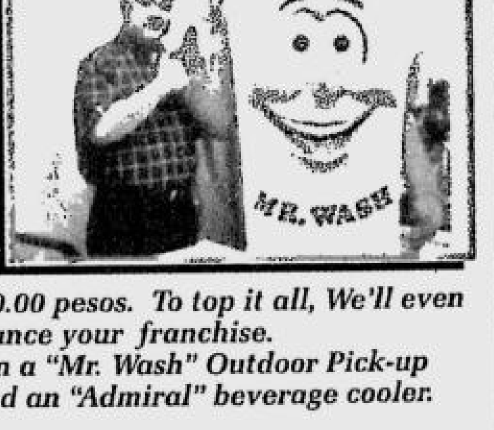

‘Liquid gold’ remains largely ignored

By Eufemia C. Estrada
Contributor

IF more and more people are becoming familiar with and liking passion fruit and its “intense jungly flavor,” it is due in no small measure to the efforts of Ernesto “Jun” Pantua of Kablon Farms.

Pantua, an exhibitor at the Bio-Search 2002 at the Philtrade Center in Pasay City, has been working to promote passion fruit juice to Metro Manilans. Kablon Farms is located in Mindanao, where the people have been enjoying the juice for the past few years after it was introduced by—who else?—Pantua.

What little passion fruit appears in Metro Manila weekend open-air markets come from Quezon province and Baguio City.

The passion fruit, so named because its flowers show the passion of Christ—His wounds, the nails, the crown of thorns, His crucifixion—is about the size of a lemon with a firm hull or shell. The variety that Pantua grows and the one most commonly found in the country is yellow. (The Baguio variety is orangey in color.)

The fruit is prepared by cutting it in half and scooping out the papaya-like seeds and pulp. A little water is added, and the mixture is whisked lightly and strained through a nonreactive sieve. More water is added depending on desired consistency and the mixture is sweetened to taste.

Pantua’s passion fruit juice is available year round. It comes in 500-ml bottles for home use. The juice can also come frozen in a small bottle, which when filled with water and refrigerated will be ready to drink.

Pantua’s passion fruit juices are also combined with other farm crops like *guyabano* or *calamansi*. They come sweetened although Pantua makes unsweetened juice to order. He is also considering the idea of sweetening his juices with sugarcane juice.

Purées of pure passion fruit or in combination with *guyabano* or *calamansi* are available in hot-fill plastic bags of 1.5 kg.

Visitors to Bio-Search 2002 had their fill of passion fruit juice, which was offered for test tasting. The juice was also sold for P15 a cup or by the bottle.

Passion fruit juice is a very rich source of Vitamin A, potassium, phosphorous, Vitamin C and magnesium. It packs only 47 calories per 100 g.

KABLON FARMS
PASSION FRUIT

The passion fruit derives its name from its flowers that show the passion of Christ—His wounds, the nails, the crown of thorns, His crucifixion

Used as sedative

In Brazil, the juice is used by mothers not only for its nutritive value but also for its sedative effect. Two glasses of passion fruit juice will calm down the most hyperactive child.

Passion fruit is well known in Central America, Hawaii, New Zealand and Australia. But many Filipinos remain largely unaware of its delights.

Pantua says with justifiable pride, “We created a new enterprise.” Yet it was not until 1993 (though they started planting passion fruit in 1985) that Pantua realized there was “liquid gold” in their farm. A British consultant for the Business Center of Notre Dame, a non-government organization in Notre Dame, General Santos City, was shocked to see fallen passion fruit rotting on the ground. Didn’t they know it was gold, he asked?

Thus the Pantuas started planting passion fruit in earnest. Kablon Farms in Tupi, South Cotabato, is neighbor to Dole Plantation, separated only by a fence of *madre de cacao*. The passion fruit vine is planted along the perimeter of the 70-hectare farm, about a meter away from the trunk of the *madre de cacao*.

Pantua’s brother Noni takes care of the plantation while he is in charge of processing. Both are graduates of the University of the Philippines in Los Baños—Noni in animal husbandry (they used to have a piggery but gave it up to concentrate on passion fruit) and Jun in agricultural engineering. The brothers also taught the people of Mindanao, who did not know what to do with the passion fruit, what can be done. They started with the schoolchildren, selling to them passion fruit juice at 25 centavos a cup. The restaurant of the Pantuas’ eldest sister near the school became the “launching pad” for the passion fruit juice, which was sold at prices competitive with that of carbonated drinks.

With their increased harvest, they supplied Dole for four years with frozen passion fruit juice for the company’s tropical fruit cocktail. The arrangement ended when Dole required Kosher accreditation (processing according to Jewish tradition), which would have cost them a hefty sum annually.

So the Pantuas turned to selling to end consumers. Three times a year, Kablon Farms participates in trade fairs in Metro Manila—in March, the National Trade Fair; June, Bio-Search; and, in the last quarter of the year, the Ethnic Food Festival.

Kablon Farms has other corporate clients, one of whom gets frozen juice for the fruit cocktail they export.

Grown from seed, the passion fruit vine bears fruit in 1½ years and continues to do so for the next three years. Peak season is from June to December.

Today, Kablon Farms processes 20,000 kg of juice annually, both from its own harvest and purchases from other farmers. Pantua admits wryly, “It is a lazy man’s crop.” One doesn’t have to pick the fruit from the trees but just wait for them to fall to the ground. Still picking up the fruit from the ground daily is a chore.

Although Kablon Farms processes other fruits like mango, papaya, pineapple, guava, *guyabano*, *macapuno*, the passion fruit is the mainstay and often combined with the others.

The *madre de cacao* fence that anchors the passion fruit vines are used by Kablon Farms to make *tablea* but that, as they say, is another story. Kablon Farms won the Gawad Saka in May 2000 for this, its fruit juice and preserves. Kablon delivers bulk orders by sea or airfreight.

E-mail ernestopantua@yahoo.com.

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Fashion show highlights bartending championship

IT’S time to pick out the next king (or queen) of the bartending throne. And while selecting the rightful heir would be a tough call to make, who says it can’t be a fun one? The event promises to be an all-night party that will mix flips, flair, fashion and music.

So watch out for T.G.I. Friday’s most awaited Bartending Championship on July 27 at Friday’s Sta. Lucia East, wherein the restaurant’s top bar meisters will battle it out for the highly coveted bartending crown. Action starts at 6 p.m.

Competing in this year’s “Shake, Rattle & Pour” are Paulo Alvero (Friday’s Glorietta), Hernando Estrada (Friday’s Malate), Charles Capinpin (Friday’s Q.C.), Ma. Angelina Uy (Friday’s Alabang) and Bekim Bedro (Friday’s Sta. Lucia).

What makes this year’s event even more exciting is that it coincides with the first anniversary celebration of Friday’s Sta. Lucia East. So expect nothing less than one whole night of the most fantastic flips and flair, with a dash of fashion and music to boot.

After the bartending battle, a fashion show headlined by Sta. Lucia’s “Generation East” and models from ALG Production, featuring the creations of Boying Eustaquio, takes place at The Brickroad. As an added treat, beer will be sold for only P1 per bottle 6-8 p.m. with an order of an appetizer or entrée (maximum of four bottles per order).

Tickets, inclusive of meal and drinks, are available at Friday’s Sta. Lucia East. The tickets are inclusive of meal and drinks. Guests who will dine in the restaurant on the said night will get free tickets for a minimum purchase of P300 per head.

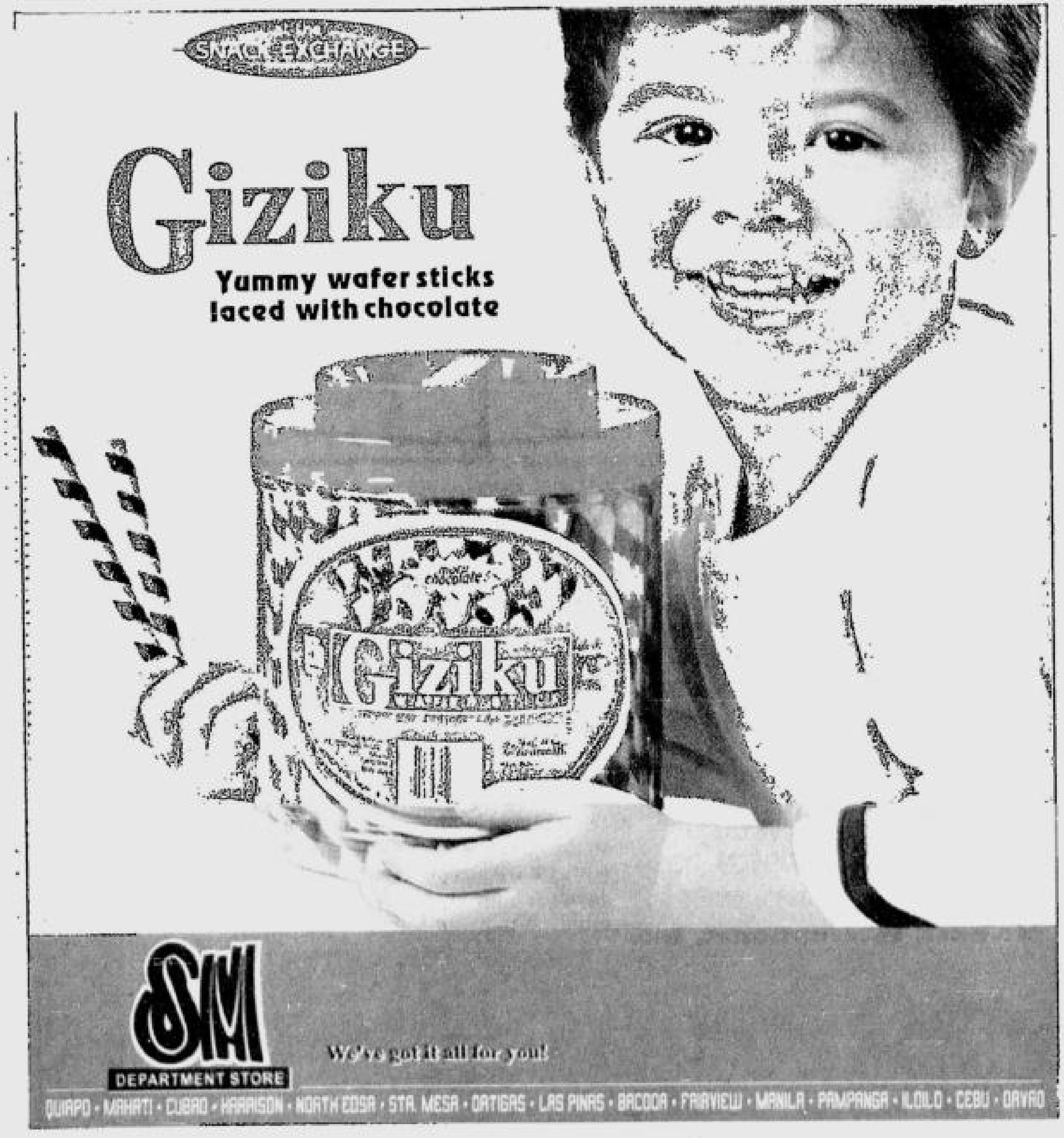
This year’s champion will represent the country in T.G.I. Friday’s Asian Bartending Championship in Guam. The winner will then compete in the T.G.I. Friday’s World Bartending Championship in San Francisco, USA.

The five finalists will first outdo each other in the Compulsory Competition, followed by the Freestyle Phase.

Judging this year’s winner are surprise celebrity guests.

T.G.I. Friday’s Philippine Bartender Championship started in 1995 and has been held annually since then.

IT’S time to shake, rattle and pour! T.G.I. Friday’ Bartending Championship contenders display their skills at bottle-flippin’ and drink-tossin’.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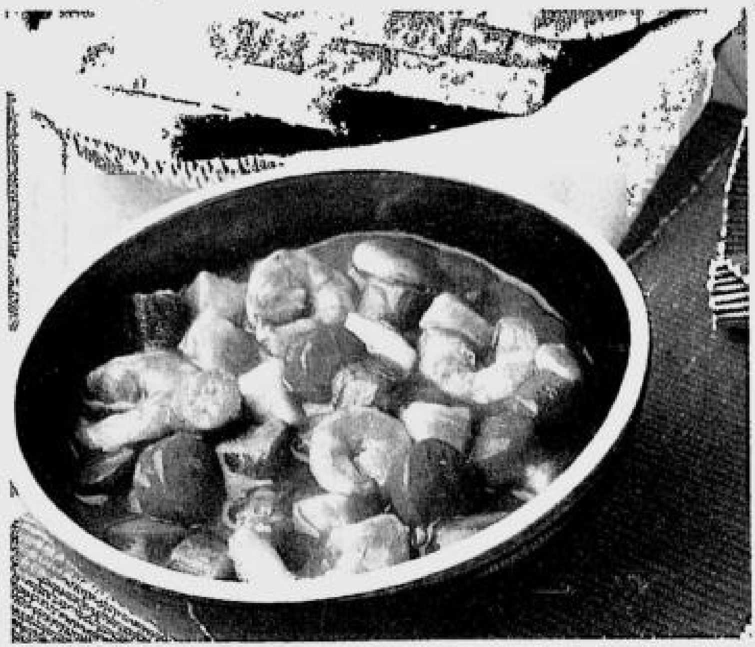


SAUSAGE and Shrimp Gumbo

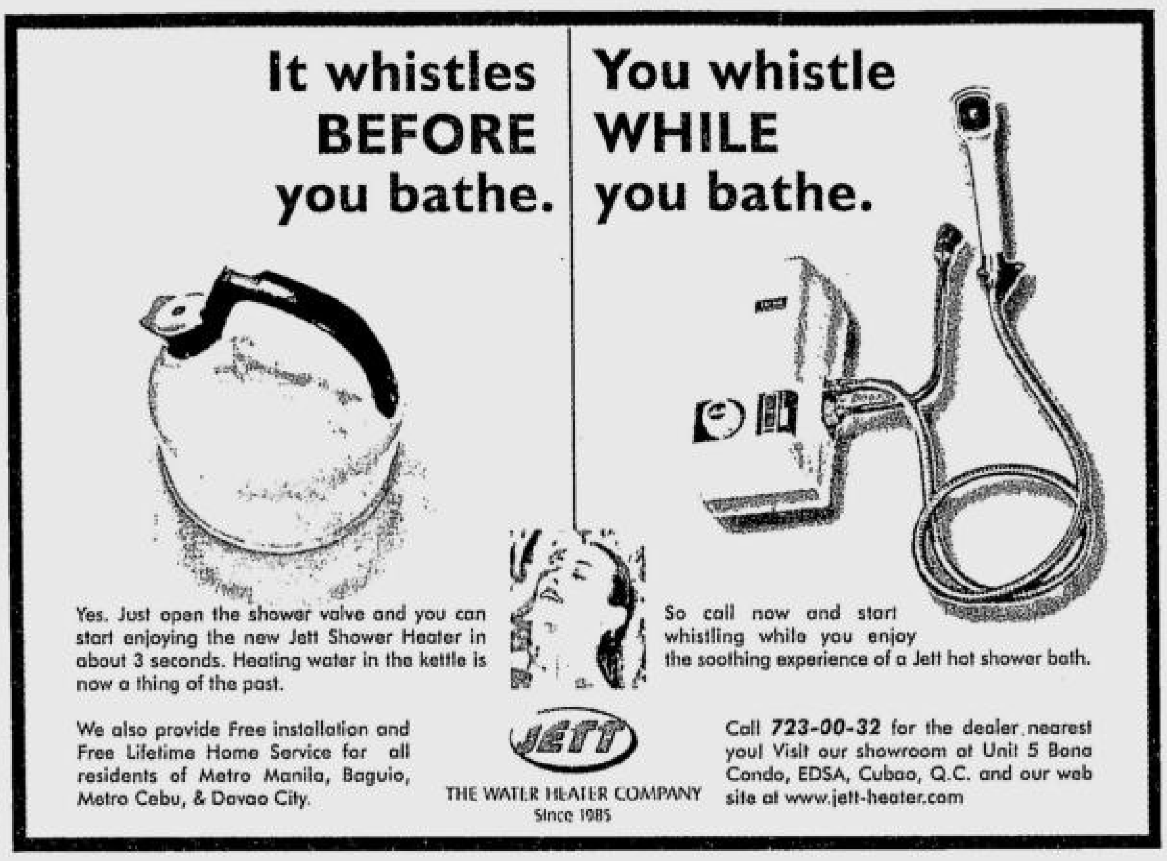
Healthy yet tasty recipes

DELICIOUS meals can also be nutritious, and a balanced diet does not have to be uninteresting.

Eat different kinds of food (protein, carbohydrates, fibers and fats) and eat just enough to keep you within the normal weight. Avoid foods that are high in sugar, fat and salt and drink alcoholic beverages in moderation.

The San Miguel Great Food Club shares these delicious and nutritious recipes from the kitchen of the San Miguel-Purefoods Culinary Center: Glass Noodle Salad, very light and tasty; Fishball and Shrimp Orleans Bruschetta,

NUTRITIOUS/ p.D3



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Bakeshop & Cake Decorating School

MS. AVELINA CARBUNGCO FLORENDO introduced cake decorating technique in the Philippines the *WILTON WAY*, the *AUSTRALIAN* way of making gumpaste flowers with very fine strings and lace on fondant, the *ENGLISH* way or LAMBETH *WORK* of overpiped scrolls and strings of very tiny flowers, the SWISS *CHOCOLATE TECHNIQUE* and *GUMPASTE DOLL* course. She and her son Jun, introduced the latest technique which they learned in Telford, York & London, British Sugar craft and The International Cake Exploration Societe last August 16-20, 2001 at Portland, Oregon, U.S.A.

1) Aug. 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9, 2002 / 8:30 am - 5:00 pm - MASTER COURSE IN CAKE DECORATING (BASIC) - P7,500. Learn the practical & easy method of making 20 kinds of icing flowers, simple borders, scrolls & strings, cake designing, sugar molding, color flow, color technique, wedding cake assembly. ***Next schedule: Sept. 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6, 2002***

2) Aug. 10, 2002 - NEW CAKES, PASTRIES AND COOKIES - P2,500. Cooked Carrot Cake, Banana Cake, Peanut Butter, Coconut Cookies, Choco-Chip Cookies, Chocolate Nut, Hopia, Siopao. Ingredients included. ***Next schedule: Sept. 7, 2002***

3) Aug. 12, 13, 14, 15 & 16, 2002/ 8:30 am - 5:00 pm - ADVANCED GUMPASTE & FOREIGN METHOD CAKE DECORATING - P7,500. New method of gumpaste, flowers, objects, marzipan, quilting, swags & ribbons, ribbon insertion, finest string works, lace pieces, fondant, chocolate fondant. **Next schedule: Sept. 9 - 13, 2002**

4) Aug. 17, 2002 - LEARN THE SUGAR-FREE CAKES AND BREADS - P4,000. Banana, Apple Almond, Chocolate, Apple Walnut & Carrot Cakes, All-Wheat Breads & Raisin Breads. Ingredients included. ***Next schedule: Sept. 14, 2002***

5) Aug. 21, 2002 / 8am - 5pm - NEW METHOD ON FONDANT USING LACE MATS, ROLLING PIN, SWAGS & RIBBONS - P3,000. ***Next sched: Sept. 18, 2002.***

6) Aug. 19, 20, 21, 22 & 23, 2002 / 8:30 am - 5:00 pm - COLD PORCELAIN FLOWER COURSES WITH RECIPE - P3,500 each. 1) Sampaguita, Sunflower, Waling-Waling 2) Rose, Cattleya, Cymbidium 3) Magnolia, Gerbera, Lilies. 4) Open Rose, Hydrangea, Grapes

7) Aug. 19, 20, 21, 22 & 23 2002 / 8:30 am - 5:00 pm - BASIC COMMERCIAL BAKING - P9,500. 30 recipes of the basic cakes, breads, pies, pastries and cookies. Ingredients included. ***Next schedule: Sept. 16 - 20, 2002.***

8) Aug. 20, 21, 22 & 23, 2002 / 8:30 am - 5:00 pm - COLD PORCELAIN DOLL 4-Day Course - P10,500. Make everlasting dolls using the latest technique in Cold Porcelain Recipe. ***Next schedule: Sept. 17 - 20, 2002***

9) Aug. 26, 27, 28, 29 & 30, 2002 - SPECIAL BAKING - P10,500. Learn to make 30 kinds of special cakes from around the world. Each cake has different icing and decoration. Ingredients included. ***Next schedule: Sept. 23 - 27, 2002***

AVAIL OF THE FIRST PHILIPPINE CAKE DECORATING BOOKS. "THE PHILIPPINE FLOWERS IN SUGAR & CELEBRATION CAKES BOOK 1", "CAKE TOPS WITH PHILIPPINE FLAIR BOOK 2", "CAKE COLLECTION BOOK 3", "A GOLDEN CELEBRATION IN COLD PORCELAIN BOOK 4", "WILTON BOOK 2002".

STUDENTS FROM FAR AWAY PLACES. WE HAVE ROOMS FOR BOARD & FOOD

OUR STUDENTS WILL HAVE SPECIAL RATES ON ALL OF MRS. FLORENDO'S BOOKS.

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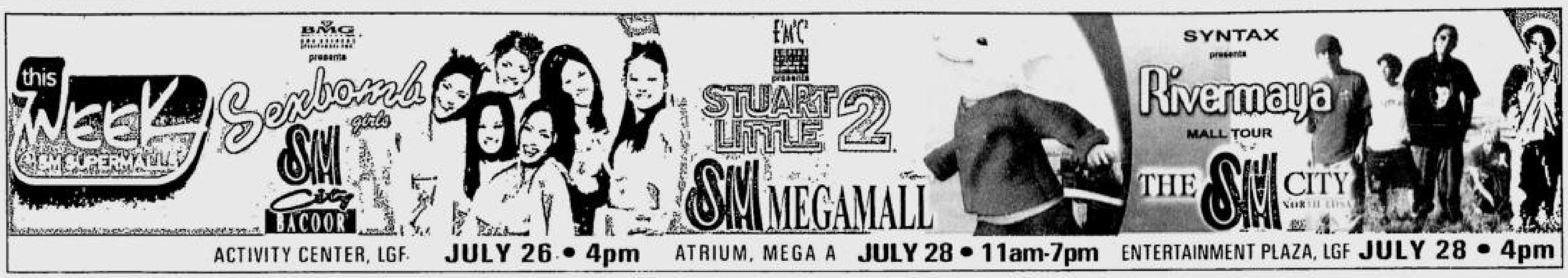
7 irresistible days from **July 25-31**, 2002 in **5** Big Malls!

SM CITY • SM MEGAMALL A • SM CITY CEBU • GLORIETTA 4 • ROBINSON'S BACOLOD



this WEEK @ SM SUPERMALLS

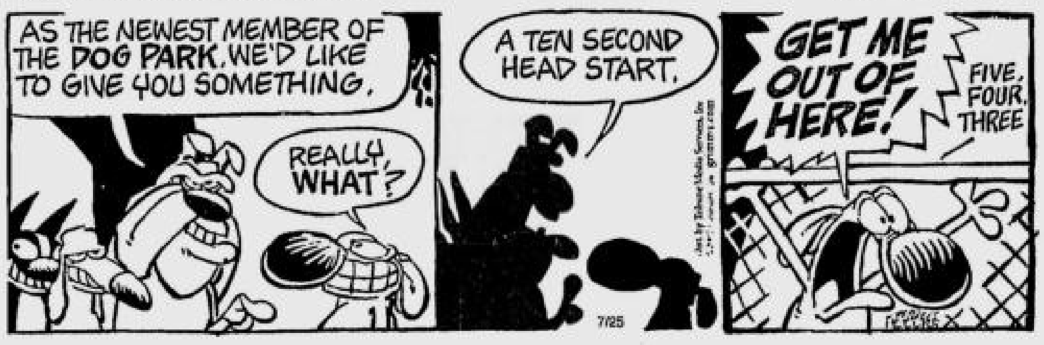
BMG presents Sexbomb girls SM City BACOOR
ACTIVITY CENTER, LGF **JULY 26 • 4pm**

FMC presents STUART LITTLE 2 SM MEGAMALL
ATRIUM, MEGA A **JULY 28 • 11am-7pm**

SYNTAX presents Rivermaya MALL TOUR THE SM CITY NORTH EDSA
ENTERTAINMENT PLAZA, LGF **JULY 28 • 4pm**

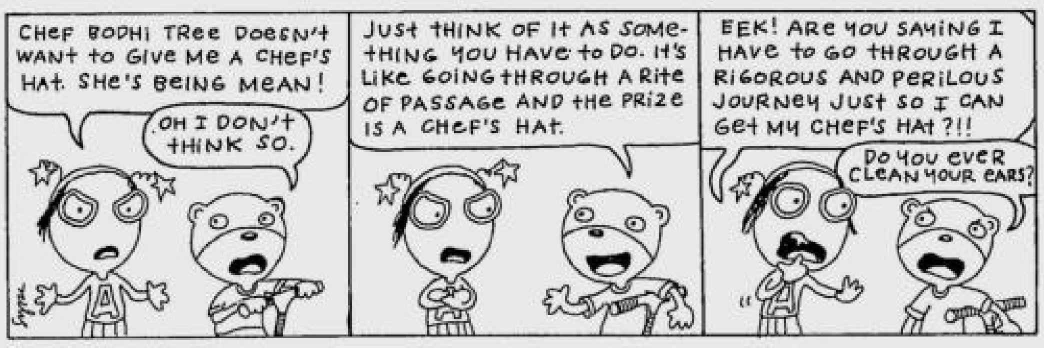
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


AS THE NEWEST MEMBER OF THE DOG PARK, WE'D LIKE TO GIVE YOU SOMETHING.
REALLY, WHAT?
A TEN SECOND HEAD START.
GET ME OUT OF HERE!
FIVE, FOUR, THREE
7/25

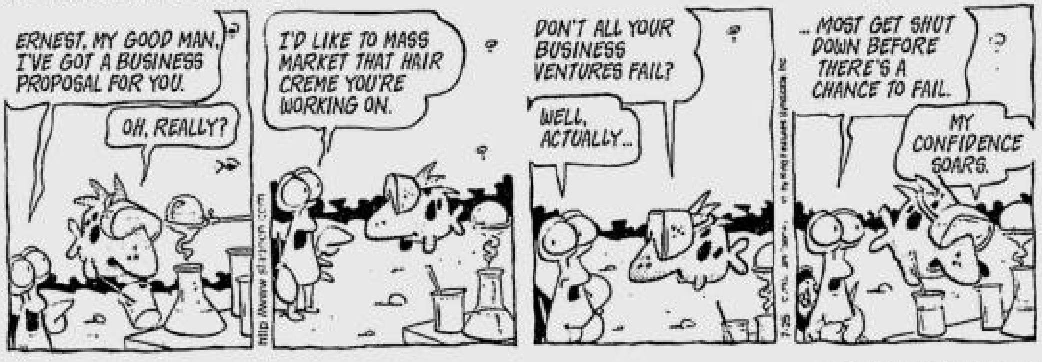
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


CHEF BODHI TREE DOESN'T WANT TO GIVE ME A CHEF'S HAT. SHE'S BEING MEAN!
OH I DON'T THINK SO.
JUST THINK OF IT AS SOMETHING YOU HAVE TO DO. IT'S LIKE GOING THROUGH A RITE OF PASSAGE AND THE PRIZE IS A CHEF'S HAT.
EEK! ARE YOU SAYING I HAVE TO GO THROUGH A RIGOROUS AND PERILOUS JOURNEY JUST SO I CAN GET MY CHEF'S HAT?!!
DO YOU EVER CLEAN YOUR EARS?

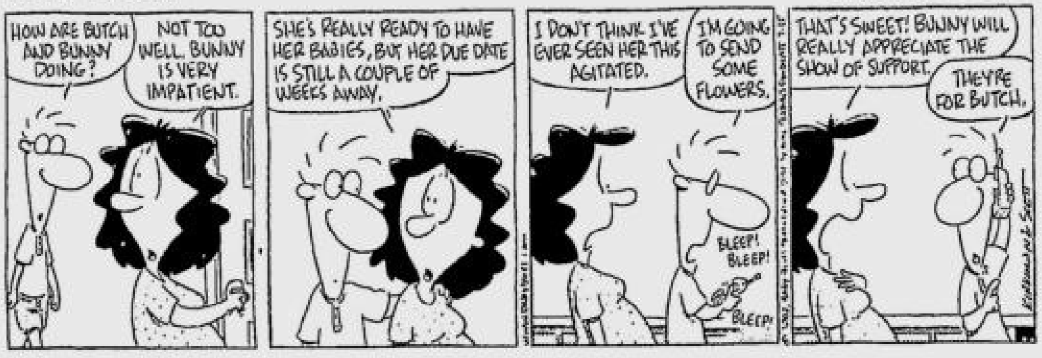
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


ERNEST, MY GOOD MAN, I'VE GOT A BUSINESS PROPOSAL FOR YOU.
OH, REALLY?
I'D LIKE TO MASS MARKET THAT HAIR CREME YOU'RE WORKING ON.
DON'T ALL YOUR BUSINESS VENTURES FAIL?
WELL, ACTUALLY...
...MOST GET SHUT DOWN BEFORE THERE'S A CHANCE TO FAIL.
MY CONFIDENCE SOARS.

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HOW ARE BUTCH AND BUNNY DOING?
NOT TOO WELL. BUNNY IS VERY IMPATIENT.
SHE'S REALLY READY TO HAVE HER BABIES, BUT HER DUE DATE IS STILL A COUPLE OF WEEKS AWAY.
I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER SEEN HER THIS AGITATED.
I'M GOING TO SEND SOME FLOWERS.
BLEEP! BLEEP!
BLEEP!
THAT'S SWEET! BUNNY WILL REALLY APPRECIATE THE SHOW OF SUPPORT.
THEY'RE FOR BUTCH.

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Estelle Getty, Maureen Forrester, Janet Margolin

Happy Birthday: This can be a great year for business or personal relationships. Your ideas are good; put out your feelers for influential people who will support your efforts. The time to act is now while you can get the interest you need. Regarding love, you will be able to make headway. Your numbers are 1, 14, 18, 22, 25, 37

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Your hard-working, disciplined manner will ensure that the important jobs get taken care of. Travel for wisdom rather than pleasure and study subjects that will aid you your goals.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Calm down or health problems may prevail. Job instability may be unnerving, but the end result will be to your benefit. Greater use of technology will lead to a better position.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Educational pursuits will pay off today. You will be able to hold everyone's attention with your wisdom. You may have the urge to travel and experience different cultures.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You will want to organize your household in a way you feel will benefit everyone. You will be systematic when it comes to keeping things in proper order.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You can form a new partnership or friendship with an individual you meet while traveling. Your involvement in an organization that is trying to help others will enhance your reputation.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): All your energy should be put into whatever work you are trying to accomplish today. You will get help if you ask for it. Your unique way of approaching what you do will interest your peers.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You'll not be one to spend a lot on social activities today. You will do what's necessary to keep fit but without spending lots of money. What you save will be for something very special—it's almost in your reach.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You will have a good eye when it comes to sprucing up your surroundings. You will interact well with family, and you can make money through the investments you make today.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You will meet interesting new people today through your educational pursuits or travel. Your choice of friends and activities will lead you in a new direction. Expect to hear some interesting information today.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You will actively search for the right job. You will achieve security because of your ability to implement your plans and because you'll have no problem confronting authority figures today.

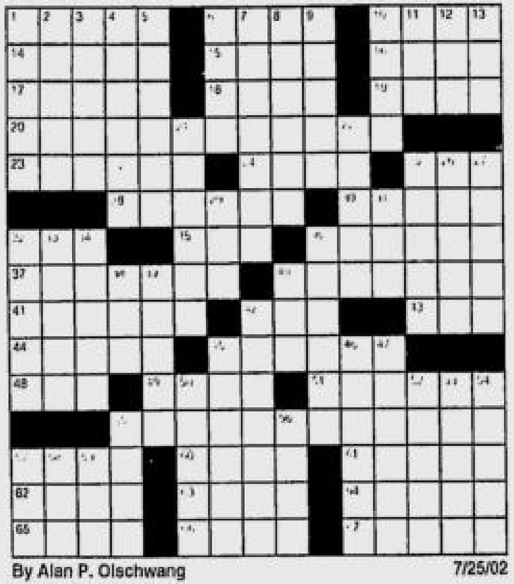
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You will express yourself with unfiltered truthfulness today, which might get you into trouble with someone you care about. Your depression will mount if you begin to feel insecure about your partner.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Don't expect someone you're doing business with to be straightforward or honest with you. Someone you work with may be trying to hold you back. Don't give him or her any grounds for criticism.

Birthday Baby: You are unique in your own little world, you will be sure to get what you want with very little effort

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Alan P. Olschwang
Huntington Beach, CA

7/25/02

ACROSS
1 Olympian Johnson
6 Practical jokes
10 Verdi heroine
14 Slur over
15 The last word
16 Walk heavily
17 Bowling challenge
18 Actress Turner
19 "Born Free" lioness
20 Start of JFK quote
23 Buddhist enlightenment
24 Cassowary cousins
25 NAFTA participant
28 Firefighter's feat
30 Boredom
32 TV regulator
35 In favor of
36 Aphorism
37 Part 2 of quote
40 Part 3 of quote
41 Is unable
42 That girl
43 A Caesar
44 Poetic contraction
45 Abdominal exercises
48 Foxlike
49 Waste treatment center
51 Singer Twain
55 End of quote
57 Wise men
60 Palo __, CA
61 All confused
62 Elliptical
63 Banana wrap
64 Fix in the memory
65 Fit
66 Neophyte
67 "The Flying Dutchman" soprano

DOWN
1 Takes ten
2 Brightest star designation
3 __ mignon
4 Newspaper bigwig
5 Apply for a pension
6 Nor'easter
7 Pastime athlete
8 Set of chromosomes
9 Blunder
10 Summit
11 Under the weather
12 John __ Passos
13 Oklahoma town
21 Square peg
22 Rhone feeder
25 College credits
26 Japanese dish
27 Directed a weapon
29 Romaine
31 Palindromic sister -
32 Particulars
33 Very slow pace
34 Island NY
36 Migratory songbird
38 Five before six
39 Cheese-and-wine dish: var.
40 Dewy
42 Jazz devotee
45 "A Thousand Acres" writer
46 Flasks
47 Catawba river
50 Not suitable
52 Hebrew month
53 Unmoving
54 Former name of Guam capital
55 Window part
56 Alone
57 Do lawn work
58 Latin greeting
59 Guy's sweetie

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

S	A	M	O	A	■	U	S	E	R	■	S	T	L	O
I	L	I	A	D	■	T	A	T	E	■	T	E	A	L
P	A	R	F	O	R	T	H	E	C	O	U	R	S	E
S	S	F	■	P	E	E	L	■	O	R	B	I	T	S
■	■	■	S	T	A	R	■	P	U	B	S	■	■	■
R	E	P	A	I	R	■	V	A	N	S	■	S	S	S
E	N	E	R	O	■	A	I	N	T	■	O	T	T	O
B	U	S	I	N	E	S	S	A	S	U	S	U	A	L
E	R	O	S	■	L	I	A	M	■	S	A	N	K	A
L	E	S	■	T	E	D	S	■	M	U	G	G	E	R
■	■	■	H	O	M	E	■	A	C	R	E	■	■	■
E	S	T	A	T	E	■	T	R	I	P	■	M	I	G
D	O	W	J	O	N	E	S	A	V	E	R	A	G	E
E	L	I	A	■	T	R	A	M	■	R	O	T	O	R
R	O	T	H	■	S	E	R	E	■	S	C	A	R	E

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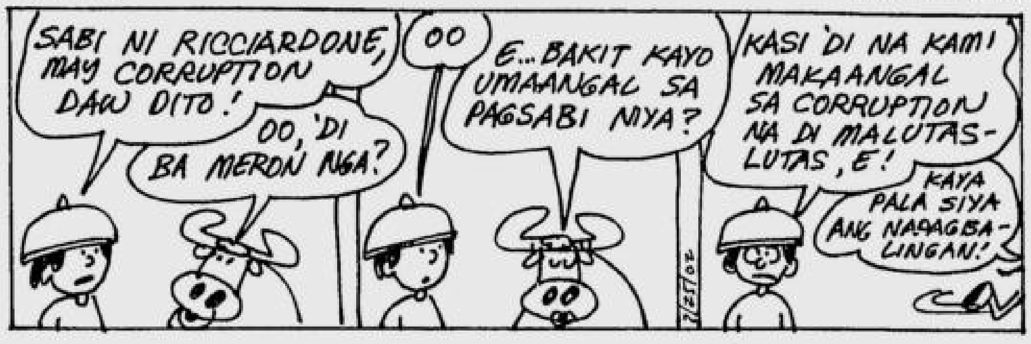
7/25/02

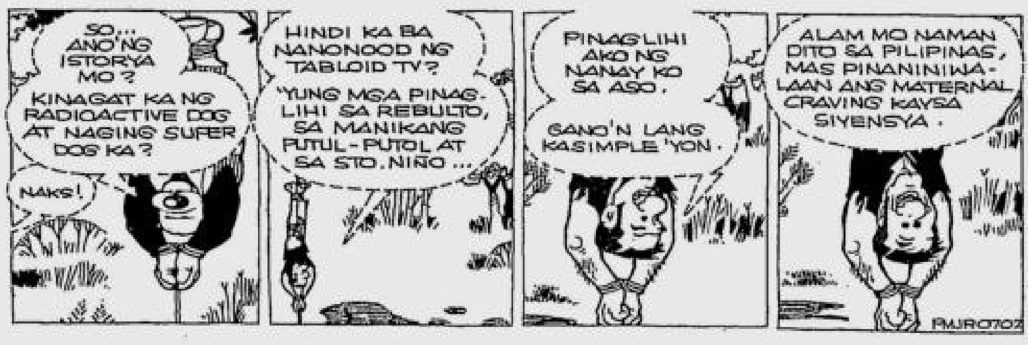
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


SABI NI RICCIARDONE, MAY CORRUPTION DAW DITO!
OO, 'DI BA MERON NGA?
OO
E... BAKIT KAYO UMAANGAL SA PAGSABI NIYA?
KASI 'DI NA KAMI MAKAANGAL SA CORRUPTION NA DI MALUTAS-LUTAS, E!
KAYA PALA SIYA ANG NAPAGBALINGAN!
7/25/02

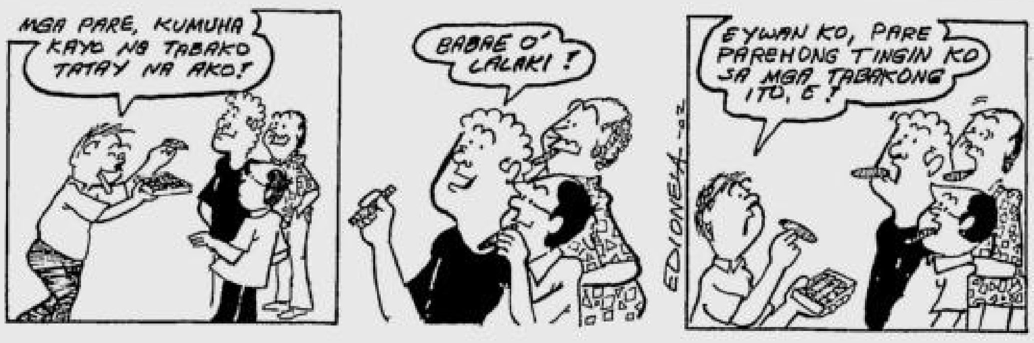
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


SO... ANO'NG ISTORYA MO?
KINAGAT KA NG RADIOACTIVE DOG AT NAGING SUPER DOG KA?
NAKS!
HINDI KA BA NANONOOD NG TABLOID TV?
'YUNG MGA PINAGLIHI SA REBULTO, SA MANIKANG PUTUL-PUTOL AT SA STO. NIÑO...
PINAGLIHI AKO NG NANAY KO SA ASO.
GANO'N LANG KASIMPLE 'YON.
ALAM MO NAMAN DITO SA PILIPINAS, MAS PINANINIWALAAN ANG MATERNAL CRAVING KAYSA SIYENSYA.
PMJR0707

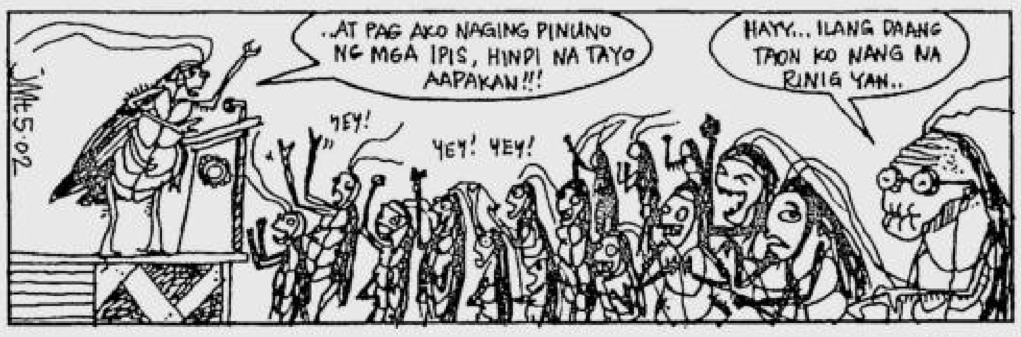
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


MGA PARE, KUMUHA KAYO NG TABAKO TATAY NA AKO!
BABAE O' LALAKI?
EYWAN KO, PARE PAREHONG TINGIN KO SA MGA TABAKONG ITO, E?
EDIONELA -02

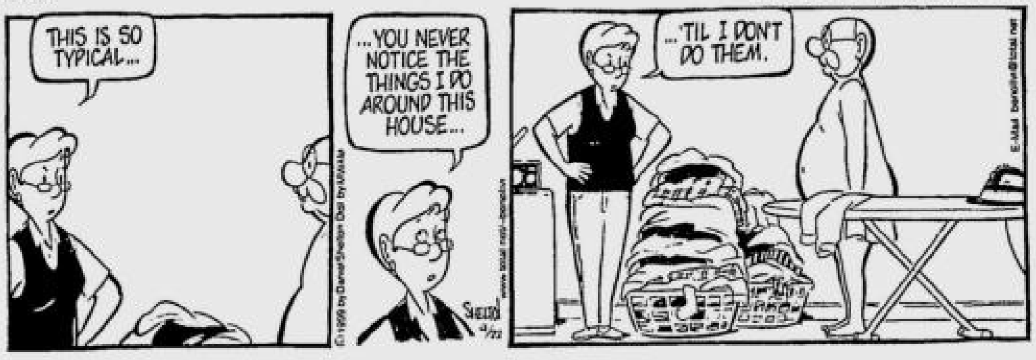
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


7.05.02
..AT PAG AKO NAGING PINUNO NG MGA IPIS, HINDI NA TAYO AAPAKAN!!!
YEY!
YEY! YEY!
HAYY... ILANG DAANG TAON KO NANG NA RINIG YAN..

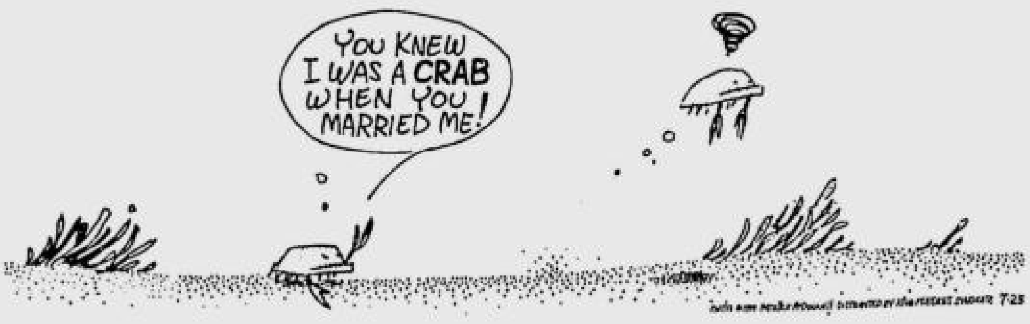
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


THIS IS SO TYPICAL...
...YOU NEVER NOTICE THE THINGS I DO AROUND THIS HOUSE...
...'TIL I DON'T DO THEM.

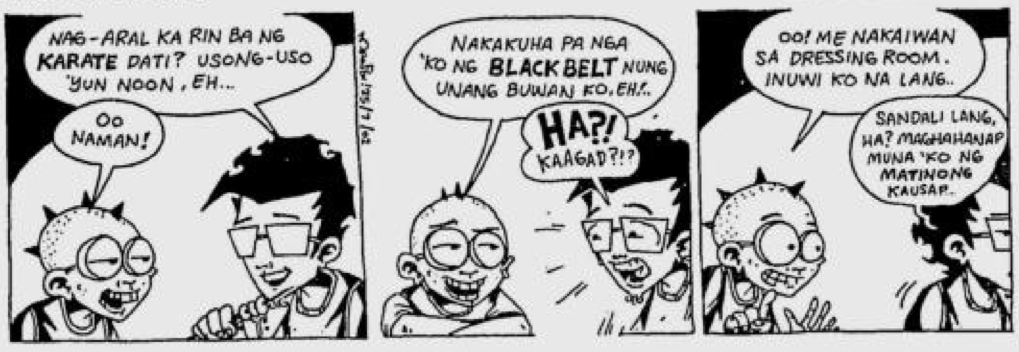
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


YOU KNEW I WAS A CRAB WHEN YOU MARRIED ME!
7-25

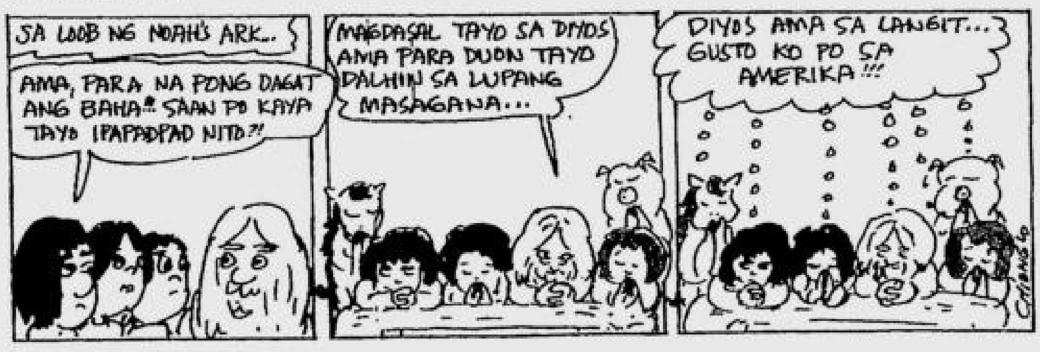
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


NAG-ARAL KA RIN BA NG KARATE DATI? USONG-USO 'YUN NOON, EH...
OO NAMAN!
NAKAKUHA PA NGA 'KO NG BLACK BELT NUNG UNANG BUWAN KO, EH!..
HA?! KAAGAD?!?
OO! ME NAKAIWAN SA DRESSING ROOM. INUWI KO NA LANG..
SANDALI LANG, HA? MAGHAHANAP MUNA 'KO NG MATINONG KAUSAP.

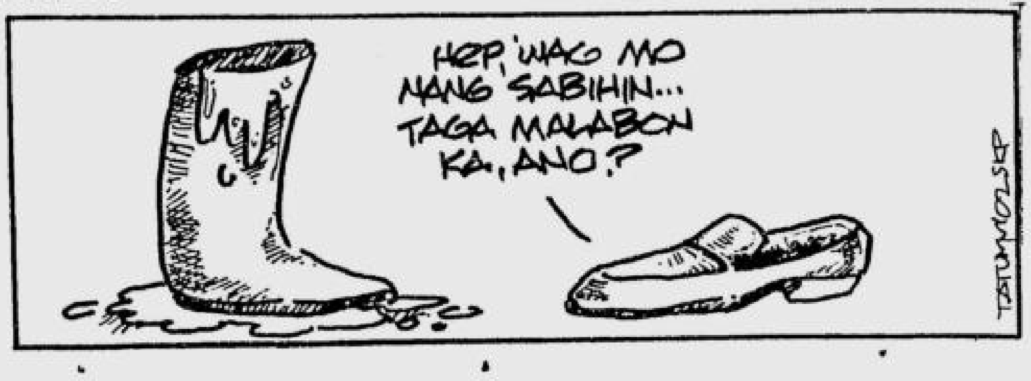
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SA LOOB NG NOAH'S ARK..
AMA, PARA NA PONG DAGAT ANG BAHA!! SAAN PO KAYA TAYO IPAPADPAD NITO?!
MAGDASAL TAYO SA DIYOS AMA PARA DUON TAYO DALHIN SA LUPANG MASAGANA...
DIYOS AMA SA LANGIT... GUSTO KO PO SA AMERIKA!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


HEP, 'WAG MO NANG SABIHIN... TAGA MALABON KA, ANO?
TATUM02SEP

Simply good food is new café's goal

CITRIO, a word coined to evoke images of citrus fruits, is a new café from the creators of Restaurant Uva.

The neighborhood café boasts of Ugu Bigyan teapots as centerpeices for wood tables. Like Uva, Citrio simply aims to offer good food and good service at the best price, all the time. While everything is still made from scratch, three words describe Citrio's goal—simple good food.

Included on Citrio's menu are hot grilled *quesadillas*, flour tortillas filled with spinach and roasted garlic, chorizos and tomatoes or *adobo* and guava jelly (prices start at P80); *focaccia* and *ciabatta* sandwiches in various forms: crab and cakes with ginger mayo, roasted pork with fruit chutney and curry mayo, grilled eggplants with *kesong puti* and basil pesto; and chicken club roll stuffed with crispy bacon, eggs, lettuce and honey mustard dressing (prices start at P85).

RED Salmon

CHICKEN Club Roll

Pastas in many varieties and prepared to order start from P110. Pasta *pobrecita*, inherited from Uva, has *tuyo* flakes, olive oil and lemon zest combination. Other pasta dishes feature smoked salmon, toasted pine nuts and pesto cream or anchovies and eggplants.

"Deepdish" items are family-style servings of main courses that are good for two people. Citrio's house specials are deep bowls filled with hot stews and curries. Fiery green curry is added to tender beef ribs, *sitaw* and kaffir lime leaves. Salmon and mild-spiced red curry are combined with tomatoes, basil and sweet pineapples. Laotian chicken curry is a fragrant mix of shallow and chili peppers with coconut cream and cilantro.

Callos de la Casa, a recipe from the household of chef and owner Fernando Aracama, is lightly spiced with paprika and contains the robust flavors of tomatoes and ox tripe. *Caldereta* uses tender lamb shoulder. Ginger beef ribs are cooked in soy sauce and a little brown sugar, and braised lamb shanks in a hoisin-star anise broth. Chicken *inasal* is roasted in a turbo broiler. *Bangus* bellies a la pobre has a crunchy garlic topping. Prices for the main courses start at only P165.

Citrio also offers a selection of pastries like the French apple pie and Mango Madness, cookie crumbs layered with pastry cream and ripe mangoes, cappuccino mousse with chocolate panache topping, crème brulees and panna cottas from P65 up.

Complimentary refills are given for iced tea and lemonade. A range of coffees from Bon Café, several teas and tisanes, fruit smoothies and sodas are also available.

Guests who order *quesadilla*, sandwich, pasta or deepdish can have all they want for free from the soup and salad buffet.

Citrio is open daily for lunch, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., and dinner, 6 - 11 p.m. It is located at G/F Century Palace Suites, Tomas Morato Avenue extension corner Timog Avenue, QC. Call 929-1570 or 72.

Tummy fillers for rainy days

IF you have the young ones and young-at-heart stuck at home on a stormy day, whipping up a big meal may be too much of a chore. Cravings suggests these top two tummy fillers: pastas and sandwiches.

So before the next storm cloud forms in your home—this time caused by growling tummies—try these recipes for Cravings Club Sandwich, Spaghetti Bolognese and Spaghetti Carbonara. They're not too time-consuming and are easy to prepare. Kids cooped at home can fix these yummies themselves to drive the blues away.

CRAVINGS Club Sandwich

Cravings Club Sandwich

Makes 1 serving

2 pc loaf bread slice, trimmed and toasted
1 pc whole wheat bread slice, trimmed and toasted
15 g chicken breast fillet, boiled
20 majestic ham
15 g cucumber, sliced
15 g tomato, sliced
1 slice cheddar cheese
20 g bacon, fried till crispy
10 g iceberg lettuce
1 tbsp mayonnaise
1 c potato chips

Assemble the sandwich as follows: loaf bread, chicken breast, majestic ham, cucumber, whole wheat bread, cheese, tomato, bacon, lettuce, mayonnaise, loaf bread. Serve with potato chips.

Spaghetti Carbonara

Makes 1 serving

¼ c olive oil
10 g red bell pepper, chopped
10 g green bell pepper, chopped
¼ c bacon, chopped
180 g pasta spaghetti, half-cooked
2 tbsp soup stock
¼ c evaporated milk
¼ c all-purpose cream
Fine salt and black pepper to taste, ground
For garnish:
1 tsp parmesan cheese
1 tsp bacon bits
2 slices garlic bread

Heat oil. Sauté bell peppers. Add in chopped bacon and sauté, then dip pasta in soup.

Add in stock and stir continuously. Mix in milk and cream. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Arrange in pasta plate; sprinkle with bacon bits and parmesan cheese. Serve with toasted garlic bread.

SPAGHETTI Bolognese

Spaghetti Bolognese

Makes 8-10 servings

1 ½ kg pasta spaghetti, cooked
For the sauce:
¼ c olive oil
1 tbsp garlic, minced
350 g ground beef
150 g ground pork
1 can button mushrooms
½ kg tomato, peeled and seeded
2 cans tomato sauce
¼ c tomato paste
Fine salt and black pepper to taste, ground
1 ½ tbsp sugar
1 tsp oregano
For garnish:
Parmesan cheese
Garlic bread, toasted

For the sauce: Heat oil and sauté the garlic. Add in the meats and continue sautéing till brown. Add in the remaining ingredients and let simmer till meat is cooked and tender. When the sauce cooked, mix in with pasta. Blend well. Serve with toasted garlic bread.

Healthy yet tasty recipes

From page D1

rich in phytochemicals and iodine; Sausage and Shrimp Gumbo, high in fiber, vitamin A and potassium; Grilled Chicken Pomodoro, very lean and rich in vitamin C; and Pork Tenderloin with Sampaloc Glaze and Caramelized Onions, low in fat, yet full of flavor.

For more recipe ideas, visit our website at www.sanmiguelculinary.com, or send a self-addressed stamped envelope to San Miguel Purefoods Culinary Center, Legazpi corner Eagle Streets, Barrio Ugong, Pasig City 1604.

GRILLED Chicken in Pomodoro Sauce

PORK Tenderloin in Sampaloc Glaze

Fishball and Shrimp Orleans Bruschetta

¼ c Magnolia Gold
1 chopped large onion
½ c green pepper
6 ribs chopped celery
1 tbsp chopped garlic
1 can tomatoes
1 c tomato sauce
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
2 crushed bay leaves
¼ kg peeled shrimp
1 c fishballs, cut into 4
½ c parsley, finely chopped
½ c water
200 g Magnolia Quickmelt, grated
French bread, sliced

Melt Magnolia Gold in a skillet. Add onion, green pepper, celery and garlic and brown slowly. Add tomatoes, tomato sauce, water, salt, pepper, parsley and bay leaves. Let simmer for 10 minutes. Add the shrimp and fishballs. Cook for 5 minutes.

To assemble, put 2 tbsp of the seafood and shrimp Orleans on the French bread. Sprinkle with grated cheese and bake for 4 minutes until cheese melts. Serves 6-8.

Sausage and Shrimp Gumbo

½ c vegetable oil
1 med onion, chopped
4 cloves garlic, chopped
[illegible] pc Purefoods Beefies Hotdogs, sliced
500 g fresh okra, trimmed and sliced
400 g tomatoes, chopped
2 pc large bananas (*lacatan*), sliced
250 g shrimps, cleaned, peeled and deveined (sliced in two)
2 tbsp lemon or *calamansi* juice
1 c water
Salt and cayenne pepper to taste

Heat oil in saucepan and sauté onions and garlic over low heat. Add sliced hotdogs and mix well. Add the okra and cook over low heat for 2 minutes. Add the tomatoes then the banana slices and mix thoroughly. Simmer over moderately low heat for 5 minutes. Add the shrimp and the lemon juice, then season to taste with salt and cayenne pepper. Pour in the water; cover and simmer until shrimps are pink and firm, about 10 minutes. May be served as topping on steamed rice. Serves 4-5.

Pan Grilled Chicken in Pomodoro Sauce

500 g pack Magnolia Chicken Breast Fillet
Salt and pepper
1 tbsp minced garlic
Olive oil for drizzling

Pomodoro Sauce:
2 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp minced garlic
¼ c chopped onions
2 [illegible] c crushed tomatoes
1 tsp dried oregano
4 pc fresh basil leaves, large
Salt, pepper and sugar to taste

Season chicken with salt, pepper and garlic. Drizzle with olive oil and pan-grill over moderate heat until cooked through. Set aside.

Pomodoro sauce: Heat oil in a saucepan. Sauté garlic and onions. Add tomatoes, oregano and basil and let simmer for 5-8 minutes. Season with salt, pepper and sugar. Serve with chicken.

Makes 6 servings.

Pork tenderloin with *sampaloc* glaze and caramelized onions

1 k Monterey Pork Tenderloin

Marinade:
1 tsp grated ginger
1/3 c oyster sauce
2 ½ tbsp sugar
1 pc tamarind cube, crumbled
1 tsp ground black pepper

½ to 1 c water
1 tbsp cornstarch, dissolved in 2 tbsp water

Caramelized onions:
¼ c Magnolia Gold
2 c sliced white onions
1 tbsp sugar

Marinate pork tenderloin for at least 1 hour in a mixture of grated ginger, oyster sauce, sugar, crumbled tamarind cube and pepper. Mix well and set aside in the refrigerator.

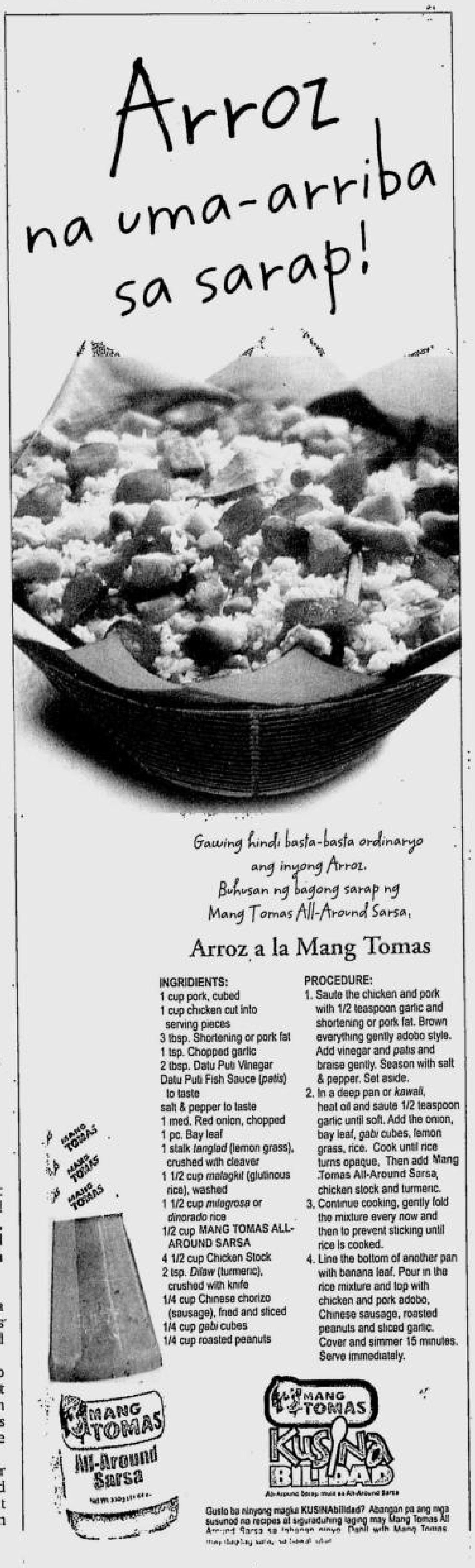
Preheat oven to 350°F.

Drain and transfer pork to a roasting pan. Bake for 45 minutes to 1 hour, basting with cooked marinade.

To cook marinade, transfer to a saucepan and add water. Adjust seasonings as needed. Thicken with cornstarch mixture. Use this mixture to brush onto meat while cooking or serve as sauce.

Caramelized onions: Melt butter in a frying pan. Add onions and sugar and cook over moderate heat until golden and wilted. Serve on top of sliced pork tenderloin.

Makes 6 servings.



Gawing hindi basta-basta ordinaryo
ang inyong Arroz.
Buhusan ng bagong sarap ng
Mang Tomas All-Around Sarsa.

Arroz a la Mang Tomas

INGRIDIENTS:
1 cup pork, cubed
1 cup chicken cut into serving pieces
3 tbsp. Shortening or pork fat
1 tsp. Chopped garlic
2 tbsp. Datu Puti Vinegar
Datu Puti Fish Sauce (*patis*) to taste
salt & pepper to taste
1 med. Red onion, chopped
1 pc. Bay leaf
1 stalk *tanglad* (lemon grass), crushed with cleaver
1 1/2 cup *malagkit* (glutinous rice), washed
1 1/2 cup *milagrosa* or dinorado rice
1/2 cup MANG TOMAS ALL-AROUND SARSA
4 1/2 cup Chicken Stock
2 tsp. *Dilaw* (turmeric), crushed with knife
1/4 cup Chinese chorizo (sausage), fried and sliced
1/4 cup *gabi* cubes
1/4 cup roasted peanuts

PROCEDURE:
1. Saute the chicken and pork with 1/2 teaspoon garlic and shortening or pork fat. Brown everything gently adobo style. Add vinegar and *patis* and braise gently. Season with salt & pepper. Set aside.
2. In a deep pan or *kawali*, heat oil and saute 1/2 teaspoon garlic until soft. Add the onion, bay leaf, *gabi* cubes, lemon grass, rice. Cook until rice turns opaque. Then add Mang Tomas All-Around Sarsa, chicken stock and turmeric.
3. Continue cooking, gently fold the mixture every now and then to prevent sticking until rice is cooked.
4. Line the bottom of another pan with banana leaf. Pour in the rice mixture and top with chicken and pork adobo, Chinese sausage, roasted peanuts and sliced garlic. Cover and simmer 15 minutes. Serve immediately.

Gusto ba ninyong magka KUSINAbilidad? Abangan po ang mga susunod na recipes at siguraduhing laging may Mang Tomas All Around Sarsa sa tahanan ninyo. Dahil with Mang Tomas [illegible]

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